



GEORGE  
ARMSTRONG  
KELLY

# Hegel's Retreat from Eleusis

Studies in Political Thought

# HEGEL'S RETREAT FROM ELEUSIS

Studies in Political Thought

GEORGE ARMSTRONG KELLY

"This book contributes in an original and very interesting way to an understanding of an often misunderstood and half-read philosopher. The importance of these essays lies in the originality of the author's approach and his willingness to bring Hegel into the present. Scholars whose main competence lies in other fields could very readily discover Hegel by reading this work."

—*Judith N. Shklar,*  
*Harvard University*

Concentrating on Hegel's political philosophy, George Armstrong Kelly pursues three lines of inquiry. The first is the broad question of the connection of philosophy, politics, and history within Hegel's system of thought. Second, the author explores Hegel's relationship with his surrounding political culture and his rejection of aestheticism for the higher goal of politics. Finally, he analyzes Hegel's theory of the state, its historical and structural foundations, its demolition by a later generation, and its relevance.

Professor Kelly explains how Hegel's total philosophical method and system convey his apprehension of the meaning of European culture and its links with a political harmony accessible to modern times.

George Armstrong Kelly lives and works in New York City. He is former Professor of Politics, Philosophy, and History of Ideas at Brandeis University.

# Hegel's Retreat from Eleusis

Studies in Political Thought

GEORGE ARMSTRONG KELLY

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

Princeton, New Jersey



Copyright © 1978 by Princeton University Press

Published by Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey  
In the United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, Guildford, Surrey

All Rights Reserved

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data will be  
found on the last printed page of this book

Publication of this book has been aided by a grant from  
the Paul Mellon Fund of Princeton University Press

This book has been composed in Linotype Caledonia

Printed in the United States of America by Princeton  
University Press, Princeton, New Jersey



For  
ELEANOR PARK KELLY  
*with love and gratitude*

## CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>Introduction</i>	3
1. Politics and Philosophy in Hegel	8
2. Hegel's "Lordship and Bondage"	29
3. Social Understanding and Social Therapy in Schiller and Hegel	55
4. The Problem of the Modern State	90
5. Hegel and the "Neutral State"	110
6. The Gravediggers of the "Neutral State"	153
7. Hegel's America	184
8. Hegel and "The Present Standpoint"	224
<i>Index</i>	251

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

VARIANTS of certain of the following chapters were previously published in the following journals: "Politics and Philosophy in Hegel," *Polity*, Fall 1976 (Chapter One); "Notes on Hegel's 'Lordship and Bondage,'" *The Review of Metaphysics*, June 1966 (Chapter Two); "Social Understanding and Social Therapy in Schiller and Hegel," *Studies in Burke and His Time*, Spring 1972 (Chapter Three); "Hegel's America," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Fall 1972 (Chapter Seven); and "Hegel and 'The Present Standpoint,'" *Political Theory*, February 1976 (Chapter Eight). I am grateful to the respective publishers for permission to reprint them.

I am also deeply indebted to the students in my "Kant, Hegel, Marx" seminars at Brandeis University over the years for their challenge and stimulation, as well as to copanelists and listeners in Toronto, Chicago, Amherst, Dallas, and New York, where some of the papers were presented. Barbara Nagy produced an admirable typescript. Sanford G. Thatcher has been a most comradely and informed editor. My wife Joanne sustained me through the dismal and joyful moments of making a book.

Finally I must thank my dear friend and intellectual co-adventurer Judith N. Shklar for the benefits of a dialogue on and with Hegel that has extended over a decade. I cannot easily express what I owe to her.



## INTRODUCTION

### Hegel's Retreat from Eleusis

## INTRODUCTION

THE title of this book was suggested to me by rereading the youthful poem written by Hegel to his friend Hölderlin in August 1796. It is a poem bristling with both ideological intransigence and Romantic trust and friendship. In it Hegel declares: "to live for free truth only; but for a peace with statutory law that regulates opinion and men's feelings—never, never to consent to that!" We have all known gifted young men who said "never, never." But the instances are rare where the repudiation of that "never" produces such fertile and honest results. As Hegel retreated from his Romantic world of Eleusis, he discovered and clarified a world at the service of human reason. But as he went forth into midday and afternoon to bequeath a majestic, but cooler, vision of his culture, he did not totally lose his attachments to that point of departure. The free truth was not forsaken; but Hegel also sought to achieve peace—the peace of the intellect and the peace of the city. The purpose of these essays is to traverse some of that distance with him, especially as his thoughts bore upon politics and the peace of the city, retracing some of the fundamental phases of his thought and suggesting some modest applications and interpretations suitable for the reflection of contemporary readers.

Contemporaries often try to write about Hegel's political philosophy along two parallel lines. In the first place, they refashion Hegel, seeking in his method and insights ways of explanation that challenge the needs of current self-understanding. Hegel Redux has been a persisting theme from the age of Bosanquet to that of Marcuse—whether it has been whipping-boy Hegel or hero Hegel, Hegel as totali-

tarian, conservative, liberal, proto-Marxian, or radical naysayer. Although Hegel has been used, abused, fudged, and egregiously misunderstood, there are many respectable reasons for his attractiveness to twentieth-century theory and ideology: the combat of "isms" issuing from the French Revolution and its opposition, the dynamics of industrial and imperialist society, the impoverishment of positivist explanations, and the delapidation of the value of political authority, to name but a few. In these efforts Hegel's thought is never followed slavishly. It is reshaped, even warped, for present purposes. Its adepts are not "epigoni" whose "curse . . . is to feel generally wretched without any particular grief" and to "bear the burden which is the heritage of those born too late,"<sup>1</sup> but great-grandchildren of that *Weltschmerz*, brandishing a Hegel mediated by a century and a half of revolutionary change, not reluctant to use him selectively or deceptively.<sup>2</sup>

Second, as opposed to this "use" of Hegel for purposes of social theory, practical navigation, or polemics, there is the attempted reclarification of Hegel's place in the European thought of his tradition and period. Call this, if you will, "archaeology." Necessarily this exercise involves historical information, research tools, and schemes of interpretation developed since Hegel's death; but these posterior techniques and concepts are employed reflectively on a past that is closed rather than a future that is open. Filtered down to our own era through many unilateral or partisan interpretations, Hegelian thought requires conscientious re-examination: biographical, structural, textual, hermeneutical, critical. Though awesome layers of ideology need to be unpeeled, if vulgar versions of the sociology of knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Karl Immermann, *Die Epigonen*, in *Werke*, V, 123. Cited by W. J. Brazill, *The Young Hegelians* (New Haven, 1970), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> According to Ernst Bloch, in *On Karl Marx* (New York, 1971), p. 111, Marx was one of the first perpetrators of this tactic: "Marx interprets Hegel's *Phenomenology* especially as if Hegel, despite his own idealism, had espoused such a materialistic dialectics."



## INTRODUCTION

are right, any strategy of "finding" Hegel beneath or beyond the encrustations of Hegelianism will be doomed to the same deficiencies as the material it is trying to unscramble. I do not take such a skeptical position, however, because Hegel's corpus is today more intelligible to us than ever before, and because intelligent efforts have been made to integrate it with recognized patterns of the history of culture. We can gain a few paces on the ideologies that fed opulently but not discriminatingly on a once valid philosophical position.

W. H. Greenleaf writes soberly: "It is necessary first of all to try to see the ideas of a particular period of the past on their own terms. . . . Then these ideas must be seen externally, in a larger perspective of historical development." He cautions that they should not be "pillaged for use in current controversy or for what they may say to us about our modern affairs."<sup>3</sup> This is right: yet I cannot see how salient, even if not "perennial," ideas can escape the fate of modern controversy or be rejected as guides. The problem is rather to do justice to the traditions of meaning and to identify their transformation, avoiding, to be sure, "criteria of interpretation which are historically inappropriate" and retrospective teleological arguments.

True humanism means both recovery and replenishment. Consequent writers on Hegel pursue both lines of discourse at once, with varied emphases, although there is no best or orthodox way to make the lines meet. Hegel attracts both "antiquarians" and "renovators" because he exposes truths that can be used and renewed: he has not yet passed from living philosophy into the "history of philosophy," as the quantity and passion of recent Hegel literature shows. The "renovators" spread the sail; the "antiquarians" hold the tiller. Whether we are at the term or in a continuation of the epoch of civilization that Hegel helped to launch and define, both approaches find ways of reinforcing each other

<sup>3</sup> W. H. Greenleaf, *Order, Empiricism and Politics* (Oxford, 1964), p. 2.

in the most interesting contemporary writing. To paraphrase Kant's epistemological dictum: interpretation without renewal is empty; renewal without interpretation is blind.

Yet if Hegel is still suggestive of new departures in social theory and political philosophy, we pursue these issues with intellectual sloppiness unless we first grasp the context of the problems that Hegel dealt with in his mature period (1801-1831), as well as the consequences of the immediate aftermath. In other words, interpretation must precede renewal. One cannot just pluck a few weighty and ambiguous dicta out of Hegel's books, notes, and letters and proceed from there to use his "authority" and some controversial notions of one's own to win dubious intellectual points or to charm partisan coteries. Although Hegel, in the *Phenomenology*, was among the first to distinguish the evolution of ideas of culture from the separateness of texts and thoughts, he achieved this feat by deep learning and hard work, not an abject reverence for scholastic authority or a self-serving scissors-and-paste view of the future.

It is my hope that these essays obey the legitimate uses of archaeology and renovation as I have set them forth in these last paragraphs.

The book is a retreat, with Hegel, from the Wordsworthian youth of the world, from hopes dashed, but with faith sustained and given rigor and reason. It did not happen to be written in its present order, nor did the author ever intend a complete or chronological canvassing of Hegel's political philosophy. Basically, three clusters of problems are dealt with. The first of these is the broad question of the relationship of philosophy, politics, and history within Hegel's system of thought. I have chosen to present this topic as a kind of envelope for the rest of the material. The controversial but crucial status of philosophy is treated in the opening essay; an exploration and critique of Hegel's historical vision closes the work. Within this envelope, a second cluster (my second and third essays) encompasses the

## INTRODUCTION

relationship of Hegel to the political culture of his surroundings and his rejection of aestheticism for the higher goal of politics. The final cluster of four essays grapples, in a somewhat new fashion, with Hegel's theory of the state, its historical and structural foundations, its demolition by a following generation, and, finally, its relevance. The reader will find that I do not always abstain from prejudices of my own conviction, but I hope he will grant that these do not distort my "archaeology" or serve any party. "Whatever happens, every individual is a child of his time."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Preface, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), p. 11.



POLITICS AND  
PHILOSOPHY IN HEGEL

ONE *can* deal with Hegel's politics by making desultory references to his total conception of philosophy, but the result is apt to be impoverished or misleading. It simply is not true that "Hegel's political thought can be read, understood and appreciated without having to come to terms with his metaphysics."<sup>1</sup> Very often this tactic will degenerate into an obtuse combat of "isms," as is characteristic of the "controversies" waged in an otherwise commendable recent anthology.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, certain critical texts (such as the notoriously difficult Introduction to the *Philosophy of Right*) float in the void if deprived of a metaphysical interpretation that would include references to previous philosophies or philosophical *Gestalten*, as well as to Hegel's own. Conversely, if Hegel's politics can never be satisfactorily wrenched from the general implications of his philosophical method, Hegel was also a philosopher—like Plato and Aristotle—who was constantly preoccupied by the relationship of the quality of the political order to the generation of knowledge. He was, as far as the phrase will carry us, a state-worshiper, not because he reveled in the state's irrational emotional residues or its transhuman marshaling of power, but because he saw it as the organizing principle which, through the institutional civilizing of the "situated" human being and the protection of his higher values from disruptive disorder, made the creation of culture and phi-

<sup>1</sup> Introduction by Z. A. Pelczynski to T. M. Knox, tr., *Hegel's Political Writings* (Oxford, 1964), p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Kaufmann, ed., *Hegel's Political Philosophy* (New York, 1970).

losophy possible in the modern age. Therefore, a *Wechselwirkung* of philosophy and politics seems unavoidable if one is to take Hegelian politics seriously and not just judge them vis-à-vis the *partis pris* of his time or, worse, those of our own read back on them.

According to Hegel, the Absolute Idea or self-knowing and self-reflective course of the world's meaning fulfills itself in the medium of philosophy, or experience (*Erfahrung*) appropriated as thought. "If it be said of philosophy that it makes reality the subject of its knowledge, the principal point is that the reality should not be one outside of that of which it is the reality."<sup>3</sup> Hegel's is a "philosophy of the concept"—that is, it is a symbiosis of method, result, and self-developing particularity, an entelechy of thought coming to grips with its constituent objects and processes. A correspondence is asserted between the method and the world's actuality. The result is the necessary result of reason, a reason which cannot go beyond what is already revealed in the world, for it would find nothing there. The self-developing particularity is a species of historical account purporting to show how what is at first abstract and impoverished becomes, through successive antagonisms and expansions, concrete and fulfilled.

Philosophy is unthinkable aside from our understanding of its own genesis: it is, quite literally, the "history of philosophy," whose outlines are conditioned by the intellectual acculturation called "phenomenology" and by the institutional acquisitions of "objective" (that is, collective) spirit. But by its nature it is also the ongoing clarification of the "eternal present," the *kairos* as it is perpetually swallowed by the *logos*.<sup>4</sup> Its history is to be understood in terms of the inevitable and purposive result it has achieved, not as a

<sup>3</sup> E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson, ed. and tr., *Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 3 vols., reprint (London, 1955), I, 75.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, I, 38: "We must not regard the history of philosophy as dealing with the past, even though it is history."

linear chain of ideas stretching from some hypothetical beginning into an impalpable future—a conception frequently damned by Hegel as the “bad infinity” of *Verstand* (scientific cognition). Philosophy doesn’t proceed to argue away its errors by controverting them with logic and “the facts” in some instant act of purification, nor is it merely a *concordia discors* of dissenting voices—realists, phenomenologists, materialists, idealists—preaching at one another across time on the nature of reality. It is an ever self-enriching thesaurus of the best that could be thought under given conditions: one cannot just choose to think any thought at any time. And it is the result of those thoughts, deprived of their superfluity and accidentalness, as grasped by the human memory. In fact, if Hegel’s philosophy is to be designated a “humanism,” it is because it is so intimately attached to the creature who creates civilization by remembering and interiorizing the artifacts of an “eternal present” (*Erinnerung* in German).

Yet since in method philosophy animates the unfolding of the actual (a better translation for *wirklich* is often “effective”), its progressive encapsulations are inseparable from the paramount aspects of the culture in which it draws breath. “Men do not at certain epochs merely philosophize in general, for there is a definite philosophy which arises among a people, and the definite character of the standpoint of thought is the same character which permeates all the other historical sides of the spirit of the people, which is most intimately related to them, and which constitutes their foundation.”<sup>5</sup> Philosophy rises above all surrounding institutions and arrangements of daily life and less adequate modes of expression, yet it depends on these no less than Socrates depended on the womb of his mother or on the intellectual license of an Athenian democracy that ultimately decreed his death.

Hegel’s posture toward what is constitutive of a philos-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.



ophy and of the nature of philosophical inquiry was radically novel, although it had been stimulated by deep changes in the Western view of time and by speculations in the philosophy of history stretching back half a century or more. Philosophies of "flux" or "becoming" had existed from Heraclitus on; but the distinction to be made is that flux was previously judged from the fixed point of the philosopher (or mystic), whereas Hegel submits himself to a necessary participation in the flux as a condition of understanding and mastering it. The secularization or "humanization" of eschatology, as opposed to the linearity of theories of "indefinite progress," is also an important part of the background, but one which, because of its complexity, it would be imprudent to pursue here.

Granting these influences, Hegel's position was radical per se within the formal realm of philosophy. If we contrast it with the position held by Kant in 1797, the difference emerges very clearly. Kant argued, in the preface to the *Metaphysik der Sitten*, that each philosophy comes on the scene to present itself as the truth and, in effect, to deny the truth-value of previous philosophies: "When . . . someone announces a system of philosophy as his own creation, he is in effect saying that there has been no other philosophy prior to his. . . . Consequently, when the critical philosophy announces that it is a philosophy prior to which there was absolutely no philosophy, it is not doing anything different from what anyone who constructs a philosophy according to his own plan has done, will do, and indeed, must do."<sup>6</sup> Hegel, no less presumptuously, claimed something quite apart. He equated his own philosophical results with philosophy in general, but he assimilated previous philosophies, together with all other persistently memorable elements of culture, into that result: "I think that [truth] dwells in every authentic consciousness, in all religions and in all

<sup>6</sup> Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice*, ed. J. Ladd (Indianapolis, 1965), p. 6.

philosophies, but . . . our present point of view has been to understand its development.”<sup>7</sup> This is a claim quite as outrageous as Kant’s, couched in more modest language. For it implies the achievement of method and result, a method made possible by the adequate philosophical comprehension of the history of philosophy (and consequently the summation of Western culture) and a result depending on the insight that no longer is discovery an appropriate landmark for philosophy unless it is illuminated by the beacon of its own voyage. All Hegel’s texts, but most especially the *Phenomenology*, chart the course of consciousness in its millennial quest for self-knowledge and indicate its port of debarkation, which is not Ithaca so much as Golgotha.

Although Hegel’s notion of philosophy gave impetus to certain forms of historicism,<sup>8</sup> most of his own texts make a bolder assertion. They presuppose that his own philosophy is axiologically higher and richer than its precedents; they assert that the method for adequating reason and the course of the world has been developed for all time; and they suggest that the conditions of freedom (or the full and unec-centric development of human self-awareness) have been achieved in the philosophical understanding. Only thus is philosophy able to transcend its definition as “love of wisdom” to become wisdom itself.<sup>9</sup> These claims—cast in a very different shape—will become the direct legacy of Marxism (its “supersession of philosophy”) and they are a serious warrant of the vital filiation of the two doctrines. Hegel did not simply think his accomplishment, as a philosopher of the Napoleonic era, to be equivalent to those of

<sup>7</sup> Hegel to Duboc, 30 July 1822, in J. Hoffmeister, ed., *Briefe von und an Hegel*, 4 vols. (Hamburg, 1952–1960), II, 329.

<sup>8</sup> I mean by “historicism” that philosophical truth can be judged only by the standards of its own surroundings; I do not intend what either Meinecke or Popper intends by the term.

<sup>9</sup> Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel* (New York, 1965), p. 372.

Plato or Descartes for their times. He had understood the total movement of the philosophical spirit as a consequence of his correct interpretation of their achievements and his own, and therefore rose above them.

Another consequence of Hegel's position is the notion that philosophy is a collective enterprise, albeit one pursued in considerable loneliness by the philosopher ("thought by itself is a lonely thing," he once said).<sup>10</sup> The progress of philosophy from its rawest speculative categories up to its consummation as union of subject and substance is an account of what is best, truest, and most effective in the human destiny. Pascal once wrote: "L'humanité entière est comparable à un homme qui apprendrait continuellement." Hegel had no illusions about the philosophical capacities of men as a whole—and he wrote disparagingly against the philosophical vulgarizations of contemporaries, like Fichte and Jacobi—but he took philosophy to be a collective work, an essential extract of all the cruder juices of human culture. The *Phenomenology* is the dramatically ordered account of a mind coming to represent humanity by learning continually through painful rebuffs and deceptions and then circling back again and again on the materials of its education in order to fortify its self-awareness up to a complete appropriation of its experience in transsubjectively meaningful form. At the point in this Daedalian ascent where "reason" (of the scientific observer) passes over into "spirit" (of the collective enterprise), the thinker and his total culture become at ease with one another and are no longer indicative of an alien mind posited against all other manner of traditional resistances and locked in a deadly struggle with them. "It is the nature of humanity," Hegel writes, "to struggle for agreement with others, and humanity exists only in the accomplished community of consciousness."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> "Berlin Inaugural Address" (*Rede zum Antritt . . .*), in J. Hoffmeister, ed., *Berliner Schriften* (Hamburg, 1956), p. 20; cf. Hegel to Daub, 20 August 1816, in Hoffmeister, ed., *Briefe*, II, 116.

<sup>11</sup> Preface to the *Phenomenology*, in Kaufmann, *Hegel*, p. 454.



The Greeks, Hegel thought, had developed this harmony spontaneously; modern man, infused with the separatism and subjectivity of Christianity and its aftermath, has had to achieve a more trying but deeper result through self-conscious mediation, a combination of liberation and submission.

The point is critical to grasp if one is to understand Hegelian politics. Hegel was a collectivist (or even an "organicist," if the term is carefully defined), but he was not a leveler. He grants that society is the rightful possession of all (though not self-regulating on behalf of all), but he does not attribute a common political intelligence to unorganized individuals, in right or in fact. Since philosophical wisdom most adequately justifies the human condition and experiment but since "for mankind in general truth is primarily revealed in the form of religion, enlivened and enriched by one's experience of himself and of life,"<sup>12</sup> and, further, since religion (not philosophy) is generally the form in which the participants in a culture comprehend their unity,<sup>13</sup> humanity as such (in the manner of democratic liberalism) can never be the mind that essentializes itself in philosophy, in art, or in the state. "A share in the government," Hegel writes, "may be obtained by everyone who has a competent knowledge, experience, and a morally regulated will."<sup>14</sup>

Out of humanity emerges an elite which, principally by means of its philosophical absorption in culture, creates structures which regulate society, encourage its orderly advance, and guarantee a reciprocity of rights and duties and a recognition of belongingness. This so-called "universal class" (echoing back to Hegel's writing of 1802) is not like Plato's in the sense that it either monopolizes wisdom or teaches the harmonies of social commerce to the benighted.

<sup>12</sup> Hegel to Duboc, in Hoffmeister, ed., *Briefe*, II, 326.

<sup>13</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, tr. J. Sibree (New York, 1956), p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 456.

For, in Hegel's analysis of the modern European world, the principle of spiritual solidarity is joined to an ineradicable acquisition of subjectivity and criticism. This latter opens pathways to the *Bürger* and to the citizen. Plato's vision of wisdom is an ascent; Hegel's is a widening circle. The hope of Plato is to train philosophers who (whatever their private preferences) might rule. The hope of Hegel is to establish a self-renewing class of executives who would not exactly rule, but serve (as Frederick II claimed to serve).<sup>15</sup> Hegel's idea of service is circular, in the sense that it depends on an estate of persons who arise from their culture, having no treasonable quarrels with it, and yet, informed by a superior grasp of what might be called "applied philosophy," know when the essential is to be implemented and the accidental removed or rejected. Their rootedness, so to speak, is in the *Volksgeist* of their own formation (Hegel's notion of *Volksgeist* is much closer to Montesquieu's "esprit général d'un peuple" than it is to any Romantic supercorporate spirit, though it is more teleological and less positivistic and "structural-functional" than Montesquieu's concept), and, as trained through the education and corporate activity of civil society, they are the most articulate spokesmen of its collective endeavor (*Sittlichkeit*).<sup>16</sup> But, as personnel of the "universal estate," they are in a position to translate sovereign commands into social action in an ostensibly nonpopulist way. As *Staatsbeamten*, their function in political matters is not dissimilar to that of philosophically oriented pedagogues in educational ones: they translate the will of a culture from the inchoate premises of its base into its most articulate and effective forms, while fending off the

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 441: "Frederick II merits special notice as having comprehended the general object of the state, and as having been the first sovereign who kept the general interest of the state steadily in view. . . ."

<sup>16</sup> See especially G. Heiman, "The Sources and Significance of Hegel's Corporate Doctrine," in Z. A. Pelczynski, ed., *Hegel's Political Philosophy: Problems and Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 111-135.

modern tendency of politics to degenerate into either the clash of particular interests or their invidious compromise. This depends on their prior training in a philosophical culture, classical and humanistic in thrust. What is now called "administrative science," Hegel argues, can be picked up on the job.<sup>17</sup> It is the old wine of wisdom that creates their state-mindedness and makes them into proper servants of the community. Their actions, in turn, maintain a kind of state which promotes an intellectual freedom that is not merely subjectivist and corrosive, but intelligently directed toward the welfare of the whole.

From the Jena lectures of 1805 on, the essential mechanism and *raison d'être* of the Hegelian state, including its relationship to philosophy and the other forms of "absolute spirit," are before us. They respond to a profound cultural analysis of modernity and the conditions of its appearance, but they are antecedent to the Napoleonic transformation of regions of Germany and, needless to say, to the political science of the Restoration. Obviously, Hegel's concept of the state is intended to express the essential features of political and social organization that he saw coming into being in Western Europe as a whole.<sup>18</sup> It may also be, as Avineri argues, that what Hegel took in 1805 to be inherently desirable as a political solution he later found in process of fulfillment in the reform of governments in the southern states and, somewhat later, in the abortive "revolution from above" conducted by Vom Stein and Hardenberg in Prussia.<sup>19</sup> Yet it is not necessary, and can be misleading, to scour local issues and occasional texts and letters

<sup>17</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, ed. and tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), para. 296, p. 193.

<sup>18</sup> The addition (*Zusatz*) to para. 258, *ibid.*, p. 279, seems decisive on this point. See also the sober remarks by Eric Weil, *Hegel et l'état* (Paris, 1950), pp. 27–29.

<sup>19</sup> Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 79–80.



in order to discover Hegel's center of gravity as a political advocate.

It is unquestionable that the man was neither a Jacobin nor a Romantic reactionary. Between these extremes, Professor Sidney Hook undoubtedly has some powerful arguments on his side when he labels Hegel a "conservative," while Dr. Pelczynski and, with somewhat greater nuance, Professor Avineri are equally consequent in pointing to aspects of his "liberalism" (especially in the context of the political arrangements of Hegel's culture). Unfortunately, many of these controversies (whose first perpetrator was Rudolf Haym)<sup>20</sup> have a decidedly *post hoc* flavor and, for all their cleverness, evade the main issue of Hegelian politics, philosophically comprehended. That main issue is only peripherally concerned with such questions as the standing of civil liberties, the size of the suffrage, the powers of the Crown, the role of public opinion, and so on. No doubt Hegel—whose eclectic and encyclopedic mental capacities stagger the imagination (mine at least)—was aware of all these matters and sometimes dwelt on them at length.<sup>21</sup> But I think it is methodologically incorrect to present these judgments *seriatim* as evidence for an interpretation of Hegelian politics. It is not beside the point to know that Hegel reacted unfavorably to the aristocratic Bernese constitution in 1794 or to the feudalistic arrangements in Württemberg; that he, in collaboration with his friend Niethammer, was an enthusiastic proponent of Napoleonic reforms in Bavaria after 1808; or that he sympathized with some of the positions of the Duke of Wellington regarding the English Reform Bill. Yet those instances, however unambiguous, cannot reconstruct the central Hegelian view of politics. Political theorists whose lasting contributions prove to

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Rudolf Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit* (Berlin, 1857).

<sup>21</sup> Especially the Church-State issue in *Philosophy of Right*, para. 270A. But this extended clarification derives from tensions in the general philosophical system and not from concerns of a topical nature.

be built chiefly of constitutional or programmatic materials are hardly to be despised—Hegel's contemporary Benjamin Constant is an excellent example—but they are misleading guides to the construction of political philosophy as Hegel conceived it.

That philosophy is neither conservative nor liberal in any strict sense. As to the former position—at least as it applied in Hegel's time—one need only measure Hegel's writings, beginning with the early essay on “the scientific treatment of natural right” (1801), against the typical values of conservatism: medievalism, the sacrally legitimized monarchy, the aura of tradition, and the stratified notion of the obedient nation. Or one might wish to compare the political writings of Chateaubriand with Hegel's very complex and explicit treatment of the subordination of Church to State in the *Philosophy of Right* (para. 270A). If anything, the “conservatism” of Hegel is prospective—anticipating Bismarck or the *Staatswissenschaft* of Lorenz von Stein—rather than contemporary, even though there is a depth to Hegelian philosophy, taken as a whole—as Karl Mannheim brilliantly pointed out—which situates it within the speculative boundaries of conservative thinking.<sup>22</sup>

As to liberalism, Hegel's reformatory impulse does not proceed according to customary schemes of liberal justification. Hegel acknowledges the power and scope of individuality in the modern political system, but he does not sanctify it, any more than he is inclined to confuse the marketplace of opinion with the materialization of truth, or to see philosophy itself as a mere competition of views on life, in which the widest possible exposure to theories about reality is taken to be the highest good. Neither, in his constitution building, does Hegel construct the machinery of the state with a view to identifying the protection of private rights with the political privileges of the holders of rights.

<sup>22</sup> Karl Mannheim, “Das konservative Denken,” *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* (February 1927), pp. 68–142; (April 1927), pp. 470–495.

Neither, contrary to some misinformed interpretations, does he in any way exalt the nascent nationalism that was becoming associated with the liberal thought of his time. Finally, his complex discrimination of the systems of civil society and the state obeys an utterly different logic from that of the characteristic liberal separation of society and government. (In that latter regard, what Marx did was not so much to “transform” Hegel’s predicate into a subject as to ideologize a thesis that liberalism had already provided.)

These preliminaries bring us back to what I regard as the root issues of Hegelian political philosophy—the core of doctrine shared between speculation and practice to which the special qualities of Hegel’s theory of the state are attached. These issues, I think, are three in number.

The first, to which I have alluded previously, concerns the relationship of the unfolding of “objective spirit” in its characteristic political form to the achievement and enjoyment of those higher forms of human culture that may be designated as aspects of “moments” of truth—that is, art, religion, and philosophy itself. The state may be, in the familiar locution, “*der Gang Gottes durch die Welt*,” but the point is not so much that God is marching in secular overshoes as the destination toward which He is marching by means of the “divine” contrivance of the state. Avineri aptly writes of the Hegelian state as “instrumental and immanent.”<sup>23</sup> The state, as I have said, through its educational facility promotes a culture of the community, often very profound and original in its highest manifestations, but never merely idiosyncratic. It also protects that culture by its sovereign integrity. “In the very association of men in a state lies the necessity of formal culture. . . .”<sup>24</sup> Particular political units rise and fall in world history, but culture survives, is transformed, and is advanced (through *Erinnerung*) because of the state’s purposive activity. The *Volksgeist* of the states that organize the appearance of “abso-

<sup>23</sup> Avineri, *Hegel’s Theory*, p. 101.

<sup>24</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 68.



lute spirit" in the world contribute to the larger units or civilizations that actually record the larger movements of the spirit.

The modern Hegelian state produces the conditions of its specific culture by mediating the demands of individuality and of the common task. Similarly, "absolute spirit" is itself composed as the result of the dialectical unity of its "subjective" (that is, genius) and "objective" (that is, collective) elements (a process in which, despite his exaltation of speculative philosophy, Hegel appears to have respected religion as a binding force). In the description of the transition to "absolute spirit" in the *Encyclopedia* of 1830 (last authorized edition), Hegel puts the matter thus: "The subjective consciousness of absolute spirit is in itself essentially a process whose immediate and substantial unity of faith in the witness of the spirit is equivalent to the certainty of objective truth."<sup>25</sup> Faith, he insists, "is only a different form of knowledge."<sup>26</sup> These and similar passages invite controversies of interpretation if one is arguing about the supersession of religion by philosophy, the "*Aufhebung* of the Christian religion."<sup>27</sup> But, that aside, if one merely looks at "absolute spirit" exclusive of its forms or progressions, one sees the state as an enabling instrument of its truth, although the state is no more in a position to impose a philosophy by *force majeure* than it is to submit its political judgments to any religious dogma that would compel public compliance against its own principles. Moreover, one sees, on Hegel's account, how the effective access to higher truth depends not only on the intersection of private and public will in the modern state, but also the mediation between "subjective consciousness" and "objective truth" in the creation of absolute forms.

<sup>25</sup> Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (1830), ed. F. Nicolin and O. Pöggeler (Hamburg, 1959), para. 555, pp. 440-441.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 554A, p. 440.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Karl Löwith, "Hegels *Aufhebung* der christlichen Religion," *Hegel-Studien*, I (1962), 193-236.

Favorite passages from the preface to the *Philosophy of Right* are often cited; the end of that work less so. But we need to grasp the importance Hegel attached to the mediation of the "common worldliness of fact and idea" and the "rationality of right and law" in producing the conditions for actualizing truth.<sup>28</sup> This last statement, which anticipates the value of "absolute spirit" in counterpoint to the way that the passage cited from the *Encyclopedia* dealt with the same transition retrospectively, is worth reviewing:

In the state, self-consciousness finds in an organic development the actuality of its substantive knowing and feeling [that is, the state is a kind of natural principle]; in religion, it finds the feeling and the representation of this its own truth as an ideal essentiality [that is, religion spiritualizes the business of the human community]; while in philosophic science, it finds the free comprehension and knowledge of this truth as one and the same in its mutually complementary manifestations, that is, in the state, in nature, and in the ideal world [that is, philosophy joins and understands its precedents as aspects of its own truth].<sup>29</sup>

As the *Philosophy of Right* ends, then, there is no declaration of the priority of the state as a human principle, nor is there any assertion per se that history, or politics in motion, is the judge of any but its own actions (in any case, a truism about posterity). Hegel claims only that "*this* insight [that is, the philosophy of history] can reconcile spirit with the history of the world."<sup>30</sup> Thus history is both a reality and a method, dialectically fused with the logic of the concept and the moral justification of government and the state. But it is not an end in itself: it conducts us toward the truth and through the truth; in it and as a part of it, owing to our participation in states, we know truth; and truth, as it were, recognizes

<sup>28</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 360, p. 222.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 222–223.

<sup>30</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 457.

itself in the community: it "knows what it wills and knows it in its universality, that is, as something thought."<sup>31</sup> Education and citizenship are the porches to the temple of wisdom.

The first point, then, is the essentiality of politics as an organizing principle in view of culture and wisdom. Here Hegel divides from the conservatives, who believe that human wisdom and politics are not conjoint; from the liberals, who believe that the purpose of politics is to promote material happiness, not wisdom; and from his idealist contemporaries who, repugning happiness, believe that wisdom is defined chiefly by the purification of personal morality.

The second main principle that binds Hegel's view of politics to his general philosophical method is the denial of utopianism and transcendence. Although, given the intricacy and ambiguity of tracing the philosophical resonances of Hegel's concept of *Idee*, any brisk statement will be unsatisfactory, we can say that Hegel's *Idee* (unlike Kant's), while remaining a theoretical projection of volition, is necessarily grounded in reality as well as thought. Minerva's bird did not wait until 1822 to spread its wings at dusk; already in the *Phenomenology* there had been a clear statement of philosophy's commemorative vocation and projective limitations.<sup>32</sup> The general point is that, although the philosophical understanding contains a critical element, it has also a justificatory duty: it does not abolish what is, in a vain leap toward some imagined perfection that ever recedes from its cognitive grasp; rather it familiarizes the mind of man with the conditions discovered in the actual world, accounts for their presence, and discriminates between the essential and the accidental in the act of situating that world in its stream of development. "Reason," Hegel writes, "is not so powerless as to be incapable of producing anything but a mere ideal . . . something separate and abstract, in the heads of certain human beings. *It is the infi-*

<sup>31</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 270, p. 165.

<sup>32</sup> Preface to the *Phenomenology*, in Kaufmann, *Hegel*, p. 382.



nite complex of things. . . .”<sup>33</sup> “Essence must appear” is the motto: “Semblance is the procedure (*Bestimmung*) by which essence is not simply being, but essence, and this semblance, in its development, is appearance.”<sup>34</sup> In other words, complacent contentment with any present whatever is scarcely in the Hegelian vein; but understanding and deepening of the presence of mind within its actuality is the mode by which philosophy becomes adequate to its real-life materials. This thesis is crisply explicated in numerous passages, but nowhere more succinctly than in the criticism of Kant in the *Logic of the Encyclopedia*, where the common notion of ideals “in time, in a future” is castigated as being productive of ceaseless and impalpable frustration.<sup>35</sup>

A major difficulty in interpreting Hegel arises from the fact that his work is simultaneously a monumental summation and glorification of the travails of the Western mind, commemorative in spirit, and also a summons for reasserting the primacy of politics, directed against those contemporaries who could place faith only in a “community of spirit” lost somewhere in the clouds. Both aspects are true; but they need to be equilibrated. A passage from Merleau-Ponty expresses marvellously well the delicate balance that Hegel was trying to achieve by recalling men to their historical legacy:

History is the judge—but not history [understood] as the power of a moment or a century: history as inscription and accumulation, beyond the limits of places and times, out of which, accounting for situations, we have made and said the truest and most valid things. . . . What others expect of the artist or the politician is that he should draw them toward values where they will recognize only afterward their own values.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 9.

<sup>34</sup> *Enzyklopädie* (1830), para. 131, p. 134.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 60, pp. 82–83.

<sup>36</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “Le Langage indirect et les voix du silence,” *Signes* (Paris, 1960), p. 92.

No doubt Hegel's attack on the mystifications of the *Ding-an-Sich* and his claim to find essence revealed in the historical world process might refer only to a logical claim about how reality needs to be grasped. But it is interesting to notice that in one of his first sustained comments on the subject he has politics firmly in view. In his unpublished and unfinished essay on the German Constitution, which is decidedly not a plea for the existing order of things, he writes: "It is not what is that makes us irascible and resentful, but the fact that it is not as it ought to be. But if we recognize that it is as it must be, i.e. that it is not arbitrariness and chance that make it what it is, then we recognize that it is as it ought to be."<sup>37</sup> Taken in one sense, this passage means that those who would attempt in practice to construct a rational political world should work with the materials at hand and not import others from their daydreams (on this count, the "realistic" link between Hegel and Marx is clear); taken in another, the world and those who reflect on its course are enjoined to perceive a relative coherence in the way humanity treats its problems, and to concede a rational workmanship in the entire production as it unfolds. Even within this compass, there is space for relatively "conservative" and "radical" readings of Hegel. Like Marx, who explained, and in a sense justified, the inadequacy of utopian socialism by the temporary absence of a proletariat, Hegel too acknowledged periods "when the existing world of freedom has become faithless to the will of better men," when they "must try to find in the ideal world of the inner life alone the harmony which actuality has lost."<sup>38</sup> And it is not always likely that the inner exercise of speculating on the best can be contained by the controls of a repressive institutional life that is no longer rational. Coming to terms with "what is" is not surrender; it is realism and the absence of self-delusion. But the degree to which the "what is" is *nec-*

<sup>37</sup> *Hegel's Political Writings*, p. 145.

<sup>38</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 138A, p. 92; cf. *Philosophy of History*, p. 69.

essarily a part of rational development is of great importance in defining the political posture of the philosopher.

In any case, the denial of transcendence to political construction as well as to the method of philosophical speculation, curtaining off the *ignis fatuus* of the "Jenseits," is a second central axiom.<sup>39</sup>

The third issue is the way that Hegel envisaged the total movement of Western culture and the role of politics within it. The hints for Hegel's treatment are planted ambiguously in the Enlightenment, but they gain special prominence in the diagnosis of Rousseau—when it is taken, as it often has been, by Cassirer and others, in a reconstructivist sense—and they are fleshed out quite completely in Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795). I later analyze in more detail the similarities and differences of Schiller and Hegel.<sup>40</sup> The task of uniting man's immediate natural integrity with his ineradicable inheritance of Christian spirituality and modern subjectivity was the staggering intellectual problem that the thinkers of the *Goethezeit* confronted. Unlike Schiller, Hegel felt that aesthetics and the psychology of culture were an inadequate context for a solution. To a "politics of culture" it was necessary to add "a culture of politics" and to surmount the whole with a speculative explanation of the new structures. Philosophy must justify the modern state, defining it as an "actuality of concrete freedom" where "personal individuality and its particular interests" are preserved as such, but "also pass over of their own accord into the interest of the universal and . . . know and will the universal."<sup>41</sup> Its psychological motor is *Sittlichkeit* or "objective ethical life," "a circle of necessity whose moments are the ethical powers which regulate the life of individuals," but "not as something alien to the sub-

<sup>39</sup> There is a good extended discussion of the philosophical problem of transcendence in Hegel and some of its ramifications in Raymond Plant, *Hegel* (London, 1973), pp. 130 ff.

<sup>40</sup> See below, pp. 55 ff.

<sup>41</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 260, p. 160.



ject.”<sup>42</sup> The Introduction to the *Philosophy of Right* is a metaphysical specification of how, in political and ethical life in general, freedom of the will abandons the sphere of caprice and embodies itself in the reasonable justice and concord of the community.

Innumerable passages in Hegel deal with the complexities of the enterprise just cited—and with the tortuous means by which philosophy discovers its “rose in the cross of the present.” One of the most explicit of these is given close to the end of the lectures on the philosophy of history:

Plato in his Republic makes everything depend upon the government, and makes disposition<sup>43</sup> the principle of the state; on which account he lays the chief stress on education. The modern theory is diametrically opposed to this, referring everything to the individual will. But here we have no guarantee that the will in question has that right disposition which is essential to the stability of the state.<sup>44</sup>

Indeed, it is because of this latter tendency toward willful subjectivity and caprice, according to Hegel, that the glorious aspirations of the French Revolution miscarried in anarchy and slaughter. However, Plato's solution, too, is inadequate; for he ignored “the higher principle of the new age . . . [creating] a work of art in which no part separates itself from the whole.”<sup>45</sup> Hence the new state must be collectively educative and secure to the freedom of the subject, at the same time; both Platonic and Kantian in the “moments” of its dialectic. Whether this state is Napoleonic or Steinian, “liberal” or “conservative,” does not seem of the greatest consequence. What is important is that its construction obeys a categorical interpretation of the destiny of European culture and is analogous to the reconciliation of other, non-

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 145, 147, pp. 105–106.

<sup>43</sup> *Disposition*: “an *ex animo* acquiescence in the laws.”

<sup>44</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 449.

<sup>45</sup> Hegel, *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1967), p. 251.

political forms of spiritual estrangement connected with that culture.

We conclude this account with the assertion that Hegel's transient political positions, taken by themselves, would yield very little hint of his remarkable achievement. In the first place, in this estimate of Hegelian politics it is important to grasp what he takes philosophy itself to be, especially in its relationship to living culture, since it is to the creation and preservation of culture in time and through time that the task of politics is ultimately addressed. Second, as the effective vessel of culture, the state must be so arranged as to "know," to understand, its conscious purposes. Third, culture is the vital substance of a people, and philosophy is its culminating expression; they *are* and *exist*, not as noble fantasies that the pain of the present inflicts on the imagination, but as shared spiritual realities that reveal the eternal in the human. Similarly, the state exists to incubate and transmit them: there is no transcendence; it is fatuous to theorize something that cannot operate, when the real stakes are in *our* lives and *this* world. Fourth, the human wound administered by self-consciousness to naturalness must, in a sense, be healed by the medicine of speculation, which restores, remembers, salvages, reconciles, and justifies. This is also the fate of Europe, transcribed in its arduous recovery of politics.

It remains only to add that Europe's fate was neither to consummate the wisdom of *Sittlichkeit* nor to rest with any durable solution in which the works of the intellect and the works of the commonwealth were mutually reinforcing. A world of combative "ideologies" and a "treason of the intellectuals" followed upon Hegel's synthesis of thought and power. Hegel's "world history" also assumed that European philosophy had managed to think, and was proceeding to create, civilization *tout court*. On the first count, events thwarted Hegel's vision of a cooperative society; on the second, his own speculative biases and shortsightedness (shared with virtually all Western philosophers) have limited his

## HEGEL'S RETREAT FROM ELEUSIS

value as a pathfinder. What is unmistakable, though, is that Hegel's intricate summation of the relationships of politics, culture, and philosophy endures as the highest intellectual effort of his time, and challenges today's presuppositions, not simply with a malleable dialectic up for grabs, but with a will for orderly comprehension unrivaled by any successor.



---

## HEGEL'S "LORDSHIP AND BONDAGE"

HEGEL's arduous mastery of the civilized Western past has been asserted, as well as the notion that this is a living past—a chalice foaming over—conducive to both the education and action of the cultured citizen. Yet Hegel's total notion of the logic of the world has not carried the field, nor have his political remedies: his is not the Logos of today's word-analysts who reduce concrete social life to a veiled pattern of understanding explained through "games." Hegel based his system on both self-understanding and struggle, achieving the former by means of the latter. Paradoxically, we create community and history by recognizing ourselves in self-combat and the combat with others.

What, then, is living in Hegel? The mid-twentieth century is prone to answer: his sense of the collective, his notion of a politically structured people as the unit of historical meaning, his grounding of right in intersubjective purpose, his penetrating explorations of psychological and sociological conflict. Both admirers and hostile critics fasten on these categories, because, as issues of debate, they are not only living in Hegel, but living in our time.

Thus Hegel's philosophy did not, as it were, merely paint "gray on gray." Not surprisingly, however, contemporary interest in this "ultimate philosophy" is due chiefly to the suggestive expansion of its insights, rather than to any desire for systematic reconstruction. In a discretionary way, Hegelian problems and patterns have gained a new lease in the fields of social and religious thought and among those for whom classical political theory is not a dead exercise. One might say that Hegel remains vital because he con-

tinues to raise polemical questions. When a giant structure of human speculation is superseded—a fate which some feel, wrongly I think, that Hegel tacitly acknowledged for his own philosophy—but survives *in membris disjectis*, anthologies tend to be compiled for partisan purposes. Karl Löwith reminds us that this was the destiny of the fragile Hegelian balance in the hands of the philosopher's immediate disciples.<sup>1</sup> The last generation has seen a renewal of this *Kulturkampf*, but now on the far side of total war, Marxism, and religious crisis. The opposition of “what did Hegel mean?” and “what does Hegel mean for us?” is posed and reposed. I personally feel—as a historian of ideas—that some intellectual mischief is caused by the failure to raise the two questions in mutual rapport.

An important case in point would be the characteristic modern treatment of Hegel's famous scenario of “Lordship and Bondage,” the account of liberation through work which so deeply affected the young Karl Marx in his 1844 manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> This tableau is most fully developed in the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* of 1807, but is also covered more tersely in the *Propädeutik* (1808–1816) and the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (editions 1817, 1827, 1830, and 1840–1845), essayed in rudimentary form in both series of Jena lectures on the philosophy of

<sup>1</sup> See Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, tr. David E. Green (New York, 1964), pp. 65–135.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, ed. Dirk J. Struik (New York, 1964), esp. pp. 170–193 (“Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole”). Marx writes (p. 177): “The outstanding achievement of Hegel's *Phenomenology* and of its final outcome . . . is thus first that Hegel conceives the self-creation of man as a process, conceives objectification as loss of the object, as alienation and as transcendence of this alienation; that he thus grasps the essence of labor and comprehends objective man . . . as the outcome of man's own labor.” It would be appropriate here to mention that, like Hegel, I assign no particular significance of nuance to the synonyms “slavery,” “bondage,” and “servitude.” I have also chosen to avoid taxing the patience of the reader with unnecessary dialectical vocabulary.

spirit (1803–1804 and 1805–1806), alluded to in the *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (1821), and, according to some interpreters, foreshadowed in the discussion of Hebrew religion in the so-called early theological essays.<sup>3</sup> As a form of consciousness, lordship and bondage was continuously indispensable to Hegel’s dialectical deduction of the formation of subjective mind, and had occupied him from his earliest attempts to construct a system. Since there can be no quarrel about the centrality of this philosophical “moment,” it becomes essential to grasp its precise meaning and content.

A full précis of this much-admired passage will be dispensed with here. I have no particular dispute with, for example, Hyppolite’s treatment, as far as it goes.<sup>4</sup> However, many modern readings—inspired by Kojève’s artful exegesis in his *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*<sup>5</sup>—tend to distort lordship and bondage in the total Hegelian structure. Though every student of Hegel is deeply enriched by Kojève, this experience is not without its dangers. In the present case, the difficulty seems to me chiefly twofold: the subjectivity of the scenario is largely ignored, and the master-slave relationship is made an unqualified device for clarifying the progress of human history. The one tendency leads to a unilaterally “social” interpretation of the *Phenomenology*, particularly the section on “*Selbstbewusstsein*”;<sup>6</sup> the

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jean Hyppolite, *Génèse et structure de la Phénoménologie de l’Esprit de Hegel* (Paris, 1946), I, 166; and T. M. Knox, tr., *Hegel’s Early Theological Writings* (Chicago, 1948), introduction by R. Kroner, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Hyppolite, *Génèse*, I, 161–171.

<sup>5</sup> This remarkable study is a compilation of Alexandre Kojève’s courses on the *Phenomenology*, ed. Raymond Queneau (Paris, 1947), given at the Sorbonne in the years 1933–1939, which exerted a powerful influence on Sartre and French Hegelianism in general.

<sup>6</sup> “Awareness” is conceivably a better translation of *Bewusstsein* than is “consciousness,” but there are problems with each. I have reluctantly chosen the traditional term because in Hegel’s language *Bewusstsein* is an agent as well as a condition or capacity.



other easily gathers in anachronistic overtones of the Marxian class struggle.

The regulative idea of lordship and bondage runs like a golden thread through much of Kojève's analysis. His general introduction stresses the point: "The Slave alone is able to transcend the World as it is (in thrall to the Master) and not perish. The Slave alone is able to transform the World that forms him and fixes him in bondage, and to create a World of his own making where he will be free."<sup>7</sup> In a later passage, Kojève asserts that he has given an "anthropological" reading of the *Phenomenology*, and that Hegel intends a "metaphysical" dimension as well, the two currents being necessarily syncretized in the final chapter on Absolute Knowledge.<sup>8</sup> A footnote here seems to clarify Kojève's resolve to treat equally of the interior and exterior relations of the consciousness (as was surely Hegel's purpose) under the anthropological notion. But, in fact, although both exterior (political) and interior (psychological) consequences are acknowledged, he sees the master-slave relationship purely as an external confrontation. For Kojève this *motif* persists in various ascending forms until the Hegelian end of time. Thus: Work and Struggle = Freedom = Time = History = Transience = Nothing = Man. In more humble language, the future belongs to the once-terrorized producer, progressively liberated by the spiritualized quality of his own labor, not to the seemingly omnipotent consumer, who treats both the servant and his product as mere dead

<sup>7</sup> Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture*, p. 34.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 308–309 and 308n. A comment on the perspective of the *Phenomenology* imposes itself at this point. I tend to agree with those who hold that the sequence and development of the *Phenomenology* are *sui generis*, and related specifically to the intention of that work as juxtaposed, especially, to the *Encyclopedia*. Thus these differences alone do not allow us to conclude that Hegel changed his philosophical viewpoint between 1807 and 1817. In cases of disagreement between a "philosophy of mind" and a "phenomenology of mind," caution of interpretation is advised. This reservation does not seem applicable to the case of "lordship and bondage."

things. Effectively, the slave releases history from nature, and it is the slave's satisfaction that will bring history to a close. Thus, while retaining the Hegelian primacy of ideas over things, Kojève, like Marx, tends to regard forms of servitude as epiphenomena of the relations of production.

As students of the career of philosophical ideas know, Kojève's lectures on Hegel have had an enormous impact. To take a recent example, the British scholar, John Plamenatz, in his two volumes on European political thought, has, with full acknowledgment, provided a Kojève-Hyppolite reading in his chapter on the *Phenomenology*. He casts lordship and bondage entirely at the interpersonal level, and his conclusion reflects the familiar line of argument: “the future is with the slave. It is his destiny to create the community in which everyone accords recognition to everyone else, the community in which Spirit attains its end and achieves satisfaction.”<sup>9</sup> But where did Hegel ever say this? Plamenatz's criticisms of Hegel (via the French commentaries) are grounded in the same analysis. How, he inquires, can one explore the possibilities of community in terms of one master and one slave, as Hegel appears to do? How can one refuse to see that manual toil is not the exclusively dignified form of labor; is there not also managerial toil?<sup>10</sup> Although Hegel is sometimes no easier to vindicate than he is to understand, this type of question will not seem so pressing if lordship and bondage is given a more balanced, more “phenomenological” interpretation. By “phenomenological” I mean that Hegel's ego must be seen here as an ideal type, collective only in the sense of exemplary, subject to a genetic onslaught of existential moods (*Gestalten*), each of which will be canceled but also retained as a moment of eternal significance.

<sup>9</sup> John Plamenatz, *Man and Society*, 2 vols. (New York and San Francisco, 1963), II, 155.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 190–192. However, neither Kojève nor, especially, Karl Marx would ask Plamenatz's second question. Cf. Marx, *Manuscripts of 1844*, p. 177: “The only labor which Hegel knows and recognizes is abstractly mental labor.”

I am not proposing some legerdemain that will take the "social" out of Hegel. Clearly he argues that the true ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) of man is "concrete" and objective," grounded in collective experience according to the immanent harmonies of a rational community where liberty and order coalesce. "The experience of what spirit is," according to the *Phenomenology*, is "the Ego that is 'we,' a plurality of Ego, and 'we' that is a single Ego."<sup>11</sup> Although the pages that introduce the discussion of self-consciousness announce this principle, collective mind does not become a reality until reason (*Vernunft*) achieves intersubjectivity and passes into spirit (*Geist*).<sup>12</sup> Lordship and bondage is a "moment" of *Selbstbewusstsein* that foreshadows society and has explicit historical ramifications. However, the view that the scenario represents a purely social phenomenon is one-sided and needs correction.

What I am about to argue is that lordship and bondage is properly seen from three angles that are equally valid and interpenetrable. One of these angles is necessarily the social, of which Kojève has given such a dazzling reading. Another regards the shifting pattern of psychological domination and servitude within the individual ego. The third then becomes a fusion of the other two processes: the interior consequences wrought by the external confrontation of the Self and the Other, the Other and the Self, which has commenced in the struggle for recognition (*Kampf des Anerkennens*). On the overtly social plane there are, at a given point in history, slaves and masters. In the interior of consciousness, each man possesses faculties of slavery and mastery in his own regard that he struggles to bring into harmony; the question arises whenever the will encounters a resistant "otherness" that goes beyond mere physical op-

<sup>11</sup> Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1952), p. 140; *Phenomenology of Mind*, tr. J. Baillie (London, 1927), p. 227. I have used Baillie's translation throughout.

<sup>12</sup> Hoffmeister, ed., *Phänomenologie*, pp. 313 ff.; Baillie, tr., *Phenomenology*, pp. 455 ff.



position to its activity. In turn, the social and personal oppositions are mediated by the fact that man has the capacity to enslave others and be enslaved by them. Because of the omnipresence of spirit, the continuum is not broken by the distinction between world and self.

In brief, man remits the tensions of his being upon the world of fellow beings and is himself changed in the process. This relationship should be stressed, since it furnishes the bridge between psychology and history. Let it be added here also that Hegel's psychology is moral, not analytical: this is why experience continually causes it to shift its ground and why it is, in the deepest sense, historical, a psychology of development, a *Bildungsroman*.

On the one hand, Hegel is showing that mere political mastery or subjection cannot inaugurate the long adventure of history and freedom unless faculties of the subjective mind, necessarily present in all men, create the possibility and condition the result. On the other hand, it is clear that none of this is conceivable in a solipsistic universe. “A self-consciousness confronts another self-consciousness”<sup>13</sup> is the abrupt and dramatic prelude to the struggle for recognition out of which mastery and slavery will arise. The possibility of philosophy, morality, and right depends on the postulation of a second finite ego and, ultimately, on the assumption of a plurality of egos. Much in the same way that Fichte produces a second ego in order to ground his doctrine of natural right,<sup>14</sup> Hegel posits society at the dawn of self-consciousness for a still more profound purpose: the analysis of the broken ego striving to restore itself. But if the Self and the Other are, to speak bluntly, men, they also dwell within each man. They are original principles of the ego,

<sup>13</sup> Hegel, *Enzyklopädie und Schriften aus der Heidelberger Zeit, Sämtliche Werke*, VI, ed. H. Glockner (Stuttgart, 1927), para. 352, p. 253.

<sup>14</sup> J. G. Fichte, *Grundlage des Naturrechts, Sämmlte Werke*, III (Berlin, 1845), pp. 30 ff.; *The Science of Right*, tr. A. E. Kroeger (Philadelphia, 1869), pp. 48 ff.

awakened to combat by the appearance of another ego in which they are reduplicated, and thenceforward transformed by history. Without this shock, there would be no history, only desire (*Begierde*), man's link with the animal world, and the unproductive and repetitive cycles of biological nature.

Hegel is, to be sure, much less explicit about the internal aspects of lordship and bondage than he is about the interpersonal and historical dimensions. The most casual reading of the *Phenomenology* and other texts makes clear that Hegel intends the analysis of relations among men and a reflection on the rise of historical communities through conquest. But my elucidation in no way denies this obvious fact.

Certain other contingencies obscure the reading I am suggesting. In the first place, the "social" implications of the tableau are even more emphatic in the Jena sketches, to which a scholar will wisely refer if he wants to understand the evolution of Hegel's thought. In many passages of this early and experimental "philosophy of the spirit" Hegel is deeply concerned with the concrete formation of society, the nature of work and its elevation to spiritual substantiality, and the creation of a scheme of dialectical development. Different sequences of unfolding and different terminologies—some derivative (mainly Schellingian) and some original—are essayed in these lectures. What will later have discrete places in the treatment of subjective and objective spirit—desire, labor, love, family, *Volksgeist*, etc.—are seen struggling for systematic deployment. And admittedly in the "recognition" scenario the emphasis is on the concrete and social. In the 1803–1804 lectures, the deduction of the family precedes the struggle for recognition, indicating that Hegel is here concerned with anthropohistorical development rather than the presentation of "facts of consciousness."<sup>15</sup> But in the 1805–1806 lectures, in a passage corresponding to what Hegel will later call "anthro-

<sup>15</sup> Hegel, *Jenenser Realphilosophie*, I, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Leipzig, 1932), pp. 223 ff.

pology" (the forms of the human soul before the awakening of consciousness), the Other is evoked as a Schellingian "dark principle"; "The Other [is] Evil, a being-in-itself, the subterranean principle, the thing which knows what lies in daylight and witnesses how it purposively [brings about] its own decline, or is in such active opposition that, on the contrary, it substitutes negativity for its own being, for its own self-preservation."<sup>16</sup> The *Encyclopedia* will clarify for us how the preconscious being is bifurcated even before it gains awareness of its own selfhood, and how lordship and bondage will display an analogous autoalienation at the higher conscious level.

A second factor which might mislead is the characteristic Hegelian insistence, against Kant, that the properties of the mind are integral and not the derivations of separate faculties or principles, like theoretical and practical reason (cognition and will),<sup>17</sup> or like the Fichtean dichotomy of finite Ego and pure Ego resolved only by an *ought*.<sup>18</sup> Of course, this is the "standpoint of reason," the goal of the Hegelian philosophy. But one obviously cannot jump from here to the conclusion that lower forms of consciousness apprehend themselves monistically. In fact the opposite is true, whether the Other is felt as impulse, as a hostile stranger, or as a transcendent God. Since Hegelian philosophy is process, even though its apotheosis is unity, it has mostly to do with the logical, genetic, or historical oppositions that have come about in the progress of the spirit.

Mr. G.R.G. Mure, in his excellent study of Hegel's *Logic*, has called particular attention to the dualistic tread of "higher" and "lower" principles in Hegel, and has doubted their effective resolution.<sup>19</sup> I share this feeling. One cannot

<sup>16</sup> *Jenenser Realphilosophie*, II, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Leipzig, 1931), p. 200.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, tr. and ed. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1945), *Zusatz* to para. 4, p. 227.

<sup>18</sup> *Enzyklopädie*, in Glockner, ed., VI, para. 332, p. 246.

<sup>19</sup> G.R.G. Mure, *A Study of Hegel's Logic* (Oxford, 1950), pp. 367-368.



of course gather in the depths of the *Phenomenology* by looking at it through post-Enlightenment spectacles alone. In the background always and at the surface much of the time Hegel is wrestling with the problems of Greek antiquity and seeking both to overcome and to eternalize them in an alien climate. The Platonic parallel between the struggles in the state and the struggles in the soul is never far distant. I will permit myself the liberty of saying that the great figures of Aristotle, Plato, and Sophocles bestride, respectively, the sections on *Bewusstsein*, *Selbstbewusstsein*, and *Geist*. The problem of lordship and bondage is essentially Platonic in foundation, because the primal cleavage in both the history of society and the history of the ego is at stake. The two primordial egos in the struggle that will lead to mastery and slavery are also locked in battle with themselves.

A third deterrent to a balanced reading of lordship and bondage is the temptation to treat the *Phenomenology* as an enigmatic philosophy of history. Sometimes this is done so that its "progressive" implications can be favorably compared with the conclusions of Hegel's later lectures. But the schematic arrangement of Hegel's finished system, given by the *Encyclopedia*, should warn us away from this adventure: history belongs to objective spirit and phenomenology to subjective, even though the experience of objective spirit is a fact of consciousness. Although the *Phenomenology* must necessarily use history to illustrate forms of consciousness, it is not to be inferred that the two genealogies are integrally parallel. Hegel's conscious avoidance of proper names is the best clue to his design.

This point can become confused, since Hegel in both instances is dealing with temporal process, and since historical time is the condition for human thought. The evolution of mind runs along the same time scale as the fate of nations. Thus, philosophical analyses that are conceptually independent must be joined in communicative discourse and

must plunder the same treasury of empirical materials. Mind as *Geist* is the integrative operator, just as temporality makes the operation possible. But the *Phenomenology* is not primarily a disquisition on political philosophy; it is the record of the spirit's efforts to attain peace in the knowledge that there is nothing outside itself.

One may question, as I do, the prestidigitatory feats of Hegel in keeping these two lines of philosophical inquiry discrete and correlative at the same time. There is more than animus in Haym's famous complaint that "history and psychology are surely not the same thing."<sup>20</sup> In fact, we all do read the *Phenomenology* as historical and political commentary quite legitimately, since it is concerned with the external relations of mind amid a plurality of egos. But the transformations of mind within itself are equally important. Both destinies, according to Hegel, will be identical in the last analysis.

Finally, if we hypothesize that mastery and slavery contains both developments, we shall not be greatly disturbed by Hegel's leaps between the social and the solitary in his deduction of *Selbstbewusstsein*, as he delineates the forms of "otherness" (*Anderssein*) in stoicism, scepticism, and the "unhappy consciousness."

The clue to the whole matter is, I think, given in the following passage from the *Phenomenology*:

The conception of this its [self-consciousness'] unity in its duplication, of infinitude realizing itself in self-consciousness, has many sides to it and encloses within it elements of varied significance. Thus its moments must on the one hand be strictly kept apart in detailed distinctiveness, and, on the other, in this distinction must, at the same time, also be taken as not distinguished, or must always be accepted and understood in their opposite sense.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Rudolf Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit* (Berlin, 1857), p. 241.

<sup>21</sup> Hoffmeister, ed., *Phänomenologie*, p. 141; Baillie, tr., *Phenomenology*, p. 229.

If Hegel means what I think, he is encouraging us to draw the plentitude of associations from the Self-Other confrontation. Thus although Hegel can be only imperfectly conveyed by static formulas:  $\text{Self} = \text{Other}$ ;  $\text{Self} = \text{Self} + \text{Other}$ ;  $\text{Self} (\text{Other}) < > \text{Other} (\text{Self})$ ; and  $\text{Self} + \text{Other}$  in  $\text{Self} = \text{Self} + \text{Other}$  in  $\text{Other}$ , etc. I regard the final formulation as most complete. In the following discussion, Hegel expands this idea:

This process of self-consciousness in relation to another self-consciousness has . . . been represented as the action of one alone. But this action on the part of the one has itself the double significance of being at once its own action and the action of that other as well. . . . The action has then a *double entente* not only in the sense that it is an act done to itself as well as to the other, but also in the sense that the act *simpliciter* is the act of the one as well as of the other regardless of their distinction.<sup>22</sup>

A corresponding passage from the *Propädeutik*, being simpler (prepared for the instruction of preuniversity students), has perhaps greater clarity:

A self-consciousness which is for another self-consciousness is not only for it as a pure object, but *as its other self*. The ego is not an abstract universality which, as such, contains no distinction or determination. The ego being thus object for the ego, it is for it, in this view, like the same ego which it itself is. In the other, it intuits itself.<sup>23</sup>

One difficulty in following Hegel lies in the fact that he often tries to convey the experience of the consciousness both from its own point of view and from the high ground of the philosopher. Another is in the perpetual passage from inner to outer which is the motor of the consciousness's ex-

<sup>22</sup> Hoffmeister, ed., *Phänomenologie*, p. 142; Baillie, tr., *Phenomenology*, p. 230.

<sup>23</sup> *Philosophische Propädeutik*, ed. Glockner, III, para. 30, p. 108.



perience that will be dissolved in ultimate knowledge. But the awakening of opposed faculties in the ego proposed by the fact of society is the principle on which self-consciousness would seem to depend. First, the spiritualization of desire will create the basis for selfhood. Then recognition will be demanded for its authentication. The faculties of the ego must contend in order to act, since a single comprehensive faculty, in however many egos, would render them either totally static or totally destructive (which amounts to the same thing).

Correspondingly, the pattern unfolds in social life. The mutual awareness of two persons, their reciprocal need for recognition, their struggle to obtain it, and the final subjection of the one to the other—these stages idealize the primitive sources of human history, seen this time from the angle of society but still rooted in the problem of the developing consciousness. Mr. Plamenatz should have no difficulty with the fact that there are only two protagonists. For, from this angle, when the struggle concludes in mastery and slavery, the master will perceive but a single slave-machine that does his bidding, and the slave but a single source of oppression. Hegel's formulation here establishes the mediating link between consciousness and society, serving somewhat the same purpose as the analogous device of the *homo economicus*. Indeed, it is to the famous tale of Robinson and Friday that Hegel refers us in the *Propädeutik*.<sup>24</sup>

Just as the Hegelian analysis demands the postulation of two egos (one man as spirit would be God, or would possess no spirit),<sup>25</sup> so at each of its ascending stages the consciousness must apprehend itself as two estranged principles until its goal is reached. This is most clearly seen in the *Encyclopedia*, where we can delve behind the stirrings of

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 35, p. 110.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Phenomenology* (tr. Baillie), pp. 226–227: “A self-consciousness has before it a self-consciousness. Only so and only then *is* it self-consciousness in actual fact; for here first of all it comes to have the unity of itself in its otherness.”

subjective mind or "phenomenology" proper into "anthropology," which has as its focus the notion of the "natural soul." Here spirit has emerged out of nature but not yet awakened to consciousness. In this relatively little-studied part of Hegel's work, the soul corresponds roughly to what psychoanalysis will later label the "preconscious"; here are contained many perceptive insights into neurotic anxiety, undoubtedly based on the philosopher's personal experience and the tragic deterioration of his friend Hölderlin.<sup>26</sup>

In *Encyclopedia*, paragraphs 318–319 (1817),<sup>27</sup> Hegel makes it clear that the soul is life on the margin of consciousness, that it primitively feels its bifurcation, its antagonism with otherness. It is subjectively anchored to its future self-conscious career and yet mired in the blind universality of nature. On the other hand (paragraph 323),<sup>28</sup> the opposition is productive and necessary. Here is the primary internal opposition in the genesis of the human condition.

Consciousness arises when the natural soul, by setting its instinct against nature can affirm itself as an ego (paragraph 327).<sup>29</sup> The relationship to otherness is now a dichotomy between self and natural soul (paragraph 329).<sup>30</sup> Self-consciousness, on the other hand, will require the affirmation by the ego of its own identity, taking the immediate form of desire (paragraphs 344–346).<sup>31</sup> Here the "*Selbstbewusstsein*" section of the *Phenomenology* properly commences, with the inadequacy of repetitive desire, the application of desire to another ego, the struggle for recognition, and the dialectical resolution in lordship and bondage. The internal struggle which expressed itself first in the natural soul, then in the consciousness, has not been resolved or abandoned. Rather, personality can emerge only because of its need for

<sup>26</sup> See Johannes Hoffmeister, *Hölderlin und Hegel in Frankfurt* (Tübingen, 1931).

<sup>27</sup> Glockner, ed., VI, 236–237.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 251–252.

self-recognition, a consequence of ceasing to direct desire merely upon the objects of sheer natural appetite (paragraph 351).<sup>32</sup> A higher, resistant otherness has been encountered; it expresses itself externally as a second ego, internally as primitive freedom. But, like the original assertion of self-consciousness through the ego's becoming aware of itself, this new stage of being must in turn be authenticated. This will happen in the struggle for recognition, where appetite and spiritual self-regard contend. They can no more destroy each other than can the social antagonists: the career of man is the proof. Thus mastery and slavery ensue, both within the ego and, as Hegel makes abundantly clear (paragraph 355), in the history of society.<sup>33</sup>

The parallel explanations are necessary. For, taken from a purely social point of view, there is no good reason why two identical egos, locked in combat, should not struggle to a static stalemate. To say that Hegel's resolution is good dialectics answers nothing. Instead we should discern the idea that natural inequalities arise in consequence of internal imbalances, not through the absence or presence of pure principles in single individuals. I shall return to this point in connection with theories of history.

“Where did Hegel's ideas on the relation of lord and servant originate?” inquires Dirk J. Struik in his edition of Marx's 1844 manuscripts.<sup>34</sup> This interesting question has a considerable bearing on the subject at hand. We can help to clarify the significance of Hegel's passage by referring to the intellectual milieu in which his philosophy took shape.

It is important to understand that this is still a world where normative psychology is seen as dominating the forms of society. Despite primitive stirrings of a social science, one still asks the question “what is man?” in order to understand the social order man has created. The strife within man's nature is a commonplace; as Montesquieu put it: “man . . . is composed of the two substances, each of which, in its flux

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

<sup>34</sup> Marx, *Manuscripts of 1844*, p. 232.



and reflux, imposes and suffers domination (*empire*)."<sup>35</sup> On the psychological plane we should recall Hume's striking dictum that "reason is the slave of the passions" and the consequent attempts of German idealism to restore the primacy of reason by enlarging its content. We should notice also that the reason-passion relationship gathers in a metaphorical content, which is precisely that of mastery and servitude. In essence, Kant's philosophy, grounded in the ideal of personal autonomy, is a theorization both of how the individual can acquire mastery over his content-directed interests through the exercise of morality or "pure practical reason," and of the conditions by which a legitimate social order can make this possible. The famous aphorism "man needs a master"<sup>36</sup> carries both public and private overtones. In fact, according to Kant, man *ought* to be his own master. But, in the words of Richard Kroner, "because he ought to master himself, man is not really free but divided against himself, half-free and half-slave. At best, he is his own slave, enslaved by his master, reason."<sup>37</sup>

Behind this urgent question, which burst out of speculation and into history with the coming of the French Revolution, lies the dual preoccupation of Rousseau: his assertion that there is no "right of conquest" in society, and his profound research into the warring sides of the human personality which the shock of social relations has induced. "A man thinks he is master of others, whereas he is actually more of a slave than they," writes Rousseau in *Contrat social*, I, i;<sup>38</sup> in his eighth *Lettre de la montagne* he repeats:

<sup>35</sup> Charles, Baron de Montesquieu et de la Brède, *Pensées*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, I (Paris, 1949), 1015.

<sup>36</sup> Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View," *Kant on History*, ed. L. W. Beck (New York, 1963), p. 17.

<sup>37</sup> R. Kroner, introduction to Knox, tr., *Hegel's Early Theological Writings*, p. 11.

<sup>38</sup> C. E. Vaughan, ed., *The Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 2 vols. (New York, 1962), II, 23.

"He who is a master cannot be free."<sup>39</sup> As we know from the second discourse, *Émile*, and the autobiographical writings, a struggle of the human faculties underlies the social dilemma.<sup>40</sup>

Not only for Hegel, but for his great predecessors and his age as a whole, mastery and slavery was a multidimensional problem—and a paradoxical one. The paradox is this. Antiquity, which had sanctioned the institution of slavery, had nevertheless intensely researched the dilemma of man's enslavement of himself. The Enlightenment, by contrast, progressively attacked social bondage as abusive and immoral, while scratching only at the surface of its spiritual dimensions. And yet the Enlightenment, taken generally, viewed the social order from individualistic premises. Descartes had founded the ego and, from the time of Hobbes on, the empirical school had constructed a mechanistic psychology which purported to explain the nature of society by way of its members. The revival of antiquity, in substance as well as form, by Rousseau on the one hand and the German idealists on the other—even when the battle of ancients and moderns had been seemingly won by the latter—is in part a response to this perplexity. The Enlightenment had furnished a sense of progress; it had not restored the conviction of harmony. Both the mind and the social order were implicated. If society was in process, then the mind could not be explored statically, as the rationalists had taught. With Hegel there is the recognition that both elements of explanation are necessary and that they must be mediated. This becomes possible only when mind is seen to have a history of its own. The tensions that propel social history are correspondingly translated to the development of the ego (a procedure in which the works of Rousseau and Kant are

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Émile ou de l'éducation* (Paris, 1961), Book IV, p. 404: "O my friend, my protector, my master . . . prevent me from being the slave of my passions, and force me to be my own master by obeying my reason and not my senses."

way-stations). Here the profundities of Greek thought find their place and their role. The problem of mastery and slavery lies along this axis. For Hegel, however, the resolution can be only tragic or unbearably smug (one takes his pick) because history, the carrier of *Geist* and freedom, is also the perfect warrant of man's fate.

A passage from Fichte's *Contributions to the Rectification of Public Opinion Concerning the French Revolution* (1793) further illustrates the currency of the lordship-bondage metaphor. Here the youthful Fichte employs the figure of the warring personality in a coinage borrowed from the French historian Marmontel.<sup>41</sup> Reason (that is, the principle of the Revolution) is eloquent against conventional self-interest (hereditary privilege):

From our birth, he [reason] invited us to a long and terrible duel where liberty and slavery were at stake. If you are stronger, he told us, I will be your slave. I will be a very useful servant for you; but I will always be a restless servant, and as soon as there is some slack in my yoke, I will defeat my master and conqueror. And once I throw you down, I will insult you, dishonor you, trample you under. Since you can be of no use to me, I will profit by my right of conquest to seek your total destruction.<sup>42</sup>

We do not know whether Hegel read Fichte's incendiary tract against the German Burkeans, but it seems likely that he did, since it was, to say the least, hot copy among young intellectuals. In any case, the contemporary associations of lordship and bondage are not to be understood without the illustrations from across the Rhine.

However, when Hegel came to formulate his mature sys-

<sup>41</sup> Jean-François Marmontel, contributor to the *Encyclopédie*, replaced Duclos in 1771 as historiographer of France. He was elected to the *Conseil des anciens* in 1797, but was retired from public life by the *coup d'état* of Fructidor. Fichte cites from one of his poems.

<sup>42</sup> J. G. Fichte, *Beiträge zur Berichtigung der Urtheile des Publikums über die französische Revolution*, ed. Stecker (Leipzig, 1922), p. 51.



tem, he was, as we know, not an unqualified admirer of the French Revolution or of the autocracy of abstract reason with its “bad infinity.” The new “right of conquest” had no more appeal than the old. Like all stages of human struggle, the oppositions of the ego had to be reconciled, not concluded in a new unilateral domination.<sup>43</sup> In the primitive scenario of the *Phenomenology* the resolution of lordship and bondage is in “stoicism,” and it is probably no accident that there are resemblances between this form of consciousness and Kant’s transcendental idealism, the idea posed above the French Revolution.<sup>44</sup> Though I do not want to draw parallels out of context in Hegel’s system, it may not be amiss to call attention to the climate of ideas in which his thoughts about lordship and bondage developed. Undoubtedly the split-personality view of contemporary European philosophy counts for much.

Another brief excursion into German intellectual history can provide a different illustration. When Hegel was developing the rudiments of the master-slave dialectic, he was associated, though not uncritically, with the philosophical ideas of his younger but more precocious friend Schelling. By the time he published the *Phenomenology* in 1807, he had struck his own highly original posture. In the meantime, the split between the philosophies of Schelling and Fichte (which Hegel himself attempted to mediate in his *Differenz des Fichteschen und Schelling’schen Systems* of 1801) had

<sup>43</sup> See *Enzyklopädie*, ed. Glockner, VI, para. 393, pp. 276–278.

<sup>44</sup> See especially, *Philosophy of Right*, introduction, paras. 19–21, pp. 28–30. Cf. Hegel’s early (1797) attack on Kant (re: *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, IV, 2, para. 3) in his essay “Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal,” *Hegels theologische Jugendschriften*, ed. Hermann Nohl (Tübingen, 1907), pp. 265–266: “between the Tungusian shaman, the European prelate governing Church and State, or the Mogul or Puritan, and the man obedient to the commandment of duty [the Kantian], the distinction is not to be made that the one enslaves himself while the other is free, but that the one is dominated from without, while the other, having his master within, is by that token his own slave.”

become irreconcilable and had led to vituperative exchange. The same half-decade saw the rise of the Romantic movement, under the aegis of Novalis and the Schlegels, and the efflorescence of interest in philosophy of history, which had been heralded by Lessing and Herder in the previous century.

Schelling's philosophy, which began from the premise of the identity of the Absolute, required a theory of history by which the descent of the Absolute into the plurality of creation and the return of created things to the Absolute could be explained. The key to this movement was to be discovered in the principle of human freedom. Schelling traced the idea grandiosely and abstractly in the *System des transzendentalen Idealismus* (1800), in the *Vorlesungen über die Methode des akademischen Studiums* (1802), and in some later writings. In reply to Schelling and, more especially, the Romantics, Fichte entered the lists with his public lectures, the *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters*, delivered in 1804 and published in 1806. Fichte's scheme of philosophical history, built on purely deductive foundations and in some ways indebted to Kant, challenged his opponents on a variety of issues that do not concern this essay.<sup>45</sup> What is of interest is a fundamental assumption that Fichte and Schelling shared, and which could scarcely have failed to draw Hegel's attention.<sup>46</sup>

The speculative histories of Fichte and Schelling were phased and developmental; both in effect sought to deduce the pattern whereby original man, innocent but instinctual

<sup>45</sup> For a full clarification of these issues, see Xavier Léon, *Fichte et son temps*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1924), II, 394–463.

<sup>46</sup> We know that Hegel read Fichte's excursus on philosophical history and thought little of it, as well as of the "popular philosophy" in which Fichte indulged; see Hegel to Schelling, dated Jena, January 3, 1807, No. 82, *Briefe von und an Hegel*, 4 vols., ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1952), I, 131. His knowledge of the *Grundzüge* was probably too late to affect the *Phenomenology*; however, he was perfectly familiar with all Schelling's ideas antecedent to 1804 because of their close collaboration at Jena.

in nature, mounted to his goal of rationality in freedom, or achieved what Schelling described as a "second nature." In order to do this, the principle of reason had to be explained at its origin. Schelling was the first to postulate that at the dawn of humanity there had been creatures of pure instinctual reason and simple barbarians. Fichte borrowed this explanation (which is not without its obvious indebtedness to mythology): "out of nothing, nothing can arise; and thus Unreason can never become Reason. Hence, in one point of its existence at least, the Human Race must have been purely Reasonable in its primitive form, without either constraint or freedom."<sup>47</sup> However, this "*Normalvolk*" had no history; for them, one day was like the next, and "religion alone adorned their existence."<sup>48</sup> It was thus necessary to postulate a race of barbarians. The union of the two races was what made history and society possible. In the "*Normalvolk*" there was no tension to activate the spring of progress; on the other hand, they embodied the principle of human destiny. The savages, on their part, lacked this principle utterly, but they contained the force of historical propulsion. Consequently, after an interlude when Cartesian paradise and Darwinian brutishness presumably coexisted, society took form with the dispersion of the races, the subjection of the savages to "*Normalvolk*" kings, intermarriage, and the tortuous ascent of miscegenated man to freedom. Apparently, Asia was the historical location for this event; the Old Testament was a "myth of the normal people."<sup>49</sup>

The parallel between this historical hypothesis of Schelling and Fichte and Hegel's lordship and bondage is much more than coincidental. Either the idea was in the air, or

<sup>47</sup> J. G. Fichte, *Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters* (Hamburg, 1956), Lecture IX, p. 138; also, *The Popular Works of Johann Gottlieb Fichte*, 2 vols., tr. William Smith (London, 1884), II, 147. See also F.W.J. Schelling, *Vorlesungen, Sämmtliche Werke* (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1854-1860), V, 224-225.

<sup>48</sup> Fichte, *Grundzüge*, p. 139; Smith, *Popular Works*, p. 148.

<sup>49</sup> Fichte, *Grundzüge*, p. 143; Smith, *Popular Works*, p. 152.



there was direct cross-fertilization from Schelling. However, Hegel does not accept this solution.<sup>50</sup> He nowhere endorses any speculation concerning original "rational" men and original "savage" men. Reason is not a natural principle in his anthropology, any more than it is for Rousseau. In Hegel, as we have seen, the appearance of self and self-awareness will succeed the primitive efforts of the preconscious soul to wrest its being from nature. Consequently, although a social event, mastery and slavery will result necessarily from struggles of awareness and recognition within the ego and not from the absolute opposition of racial principles embodied in discrete, historical individuals. Hegel is defending a doctrine of original equality which is curiously and dangerously denied by Fichte.<sup>51</sup>

Thus I believe that the passage in the *Phenomenology* and in other works can be justifiably interpreted, *inter alia*, as an attempt to explain inequality at the foundation of society without resorting to the dual-nature hypothesis. The alternative is to explain it from within the ego. Here, precisely, is the "phenomenological" dimension that we lack in Kojève.

Let us attempt to restore this dimension. The "master" who emerges from the struggle for recognition can be identified with the primitive notion of control or decision. Hegel tells us specifically that this act of victory is the birth of freedom (*Encyclopedia*, paragraph 355).<sup>52</sup> Man is the only creature which, under certain "non-natural" pressures, is willing to stake its life. This is, so to speak, the first creative act of the human personality: the slave will invent history, but only after the master has made humanity possible. The

<sup>50</sup> See Hegel, *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte* (Hamburg, 1955), p. 31.

<sup>51</sup> Fichte is, of course, the German philosopher who, *par excellence*, stressed equality and was often attacked as a Jacobin. However, there is a nervous resemblance, across all human history, between the "Normalvolk" of the *Grundzüge* and the "Urvolk" of the *Addresses to the German Nation* (1808).

<sup>52</sup> Glockner, ed., VI, 254.

master's solution, however, is without issue. Hegel has already (in *Encyclopedia*, paragraph 323, and elsewhere)<sup>53</sup> pointed out the danger of imbalance between higher and lower principles. One cannot abandon nature, nor should one drown himself in it. In the master-slave situation, there is neither education, nor progress, nor history—only the repetitive fulfillment of the master's wants.

In this impasse, the master-principle—courage, decisiveness, idealism—is seen to pass into its opposite, becoming, as Kojève points out,<sup>54</sup> a new form of *Begierde*. Higher development can come only from the slave-principle, which has itself been transformed through the experience of subjection and terror into the activities of labor, conservation, and memory: the conditions of human advance. Here are manifold historical overtones which it is not difficult to exploit. I think, though, that two points must be argued against Kojève: (1) the slave-master dialectic is appropriate only to a certain stage of consciousness for Hegel, even though it is still canceled and retained (*aufgehoben*); succeeding history will be a record of more subtle and comprehensive forms of estrangement; (2) both principles are equally vital in the progress of the spirit towards its destiny: if Marx developed one side of this dichotomy, Nietzsche seized upon the other.

This is decisively clarified by Hegel himself in the *Philosophy of Right*:

The position of the free will, with which right and the science of right begin, is already in advance of the false position at which man, as a natural entity and only the concept implicit, is for that reason capable of being enslaved. This false, *comparatively primitive* [my italics], phenomenon of slavery is one which befalls mind when mind is only at the level of consciousness. The dialectic of the concept and of the purely immediate consciousness

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>54</sup> *Introduction à la lecture*, p. 52.

of freedom brings about at that point the fight for recognition and the relationship of master and slave.<sup>55</sup>

In a corresponding *Zusatz* Hegel adds: "if a man is a slave, his own will is responsible for his slavery, just as it is its will which is responsible if a people is subjugated. Hence the wrong of slavery lies at the door not simply of enslavers or conquerors but of the slaves and the conquered themselves."<sup>56</sup>

This should be sufficient to show that "the future belongs to the slave" is an unwarranted and romanticized refraction of Hegel's thought. Slavery cannot found the right of political communities any more than it can account for the free personality. But it is necessary for history as well as for the development of mind: both right and free personality appear in history and do not repose above it. In the *Encyclopedia* of 1845 (paragraph 435, *Zusatz*) Hegel describes the subjection of the servant as "a necessary moment in the education (*Bildung*) of every man."<sup>57</sup> "No man," he adds, "can, without this will-breaking discipline, become free and worthy to command." As for nations, "bondage and tyranny are necessary things in the history of peoples." This could be adapted to the Marxian view of the proletariat. But as we recall from the *Phenomenology*, the dialectical outcome is not a transhistorical class struggle but the temporary refuge of stoicism, where emperor and slave see the world with the same eyes. Even though "only through the slave's becoming free can the master be completely free,"<sup>58</sup> the Hegelian future will unfold out of their joint endeavors. They can no more be incessantly opposed than can the organic faculties of the ego itself.

My conclusion is foreshadowed. Although inner and outer, higher and lower, reason and passion are undoubtedly intended to be dissolved at the ultimate Hegelian apex, the

<sup>55</sup> *Op. cit.*, para. 57, p. 48.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>57</sup> Glockner, ed., X (*System der Philosophie*, III), 288.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, *Zusatz* to para. 436, p. 290.



internality of the ego cannot be disregarded in understanding the development of *Selbstbewusstsein*. The social reading, taken alone, can encourage sharp distortions. Nor is history for Hegel simply a record of the millennial efforts of the slave to overthrow the master, just as the development of spirit is not the continuous attempt of a single faculty to triumph in the ego. In both cases, the aspiration is harmony and self-knowing identity, the sense of “being at home” (*zu Hause sein*) so frequently evoked in Hegel, the assimilation of freedom and fate. The failure to read Hegel’s texts (especially those leading up to “lordship and bondage”) with close attention to levels of discourse can beget social hypotheses that do not square with Hegel’s known conclusions. We can further profit by exploring the philosophical and historical issues of Hegel’s own time, instead of superimposing those of an industrial epoch which he only narrowly, if shrewdly, glimpsed. That the character of the rational Hegelian society is much more Platonic than it is Marxian is already clear from the Jena lectures, which antedate the *Phenomenology*.<sup>59</sup> Kojève’s original exegesis of Hegelian themes is a profound work for our own times. But from the standpoint of historical understanding, a “Marxian” *Phenomenology* does not make very good sense. This view ignores the depth and passion of Hegel’s Greek attachments; it ignores, too, the complicated range of his struggle with the Kantian split vision. These are the two combatants wrestling on the soil of Christian Europe for the possession of Hegel’s own ego.<sup>60</sup> It is to be questioned

<sup>59</sup> *Jenenser Realphilosophie*, II, 253–263. We must not ignore, however, that Hegel draws a careful distinction between the Platonic (really Lacedaemonian) and the modern polity (p. 251).

<sup>60</sup> The Greeks, for Hegel, as for Schiller, Hölderlin, and others, had developed the perfect harmony and proportion of humanity; Kant’s morality, on the other hand, represents the infinity of striving and is framed not for man but for “all rational beings.” In one of his most electrifying and brilliant passages, Hegel describes the impact of the finite and the infinite, always in the same metaphor of struggle and comprehension: “I am the struggle [between the extremes of infinity

whether he resolved this struggle of the old world and the new in his higher *Sittlichkeit* of the state and in his "Christianity without pictures."

---

and finitude], for this struggle is a conflict defined not by the indifference of the two sides in their distinction, but by their being bound together in one entity. I am not one of the fighters locked in battle, but both, and I am the struggle itself. I am fire and water . . ." (*Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Glockner, ed., XV, 80).

### THREE

---

## SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING AND SOCIAL THERAPY IN SCHILLER AND HEGEL

Von unserer Politik. Wir haben gar keine. . . .

Klopstock, *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik*

Wo das gelehrte beginnt, hört das politische auf.

*Xenien*, No. 85

IN the famous processional of self-awareness in the *Phenomenology*, the master-slave dialectic leads to Hegel's other *leitmotiv* of the "unhappy consciousness." Both ideas have wide resonances; but, as I have already argued, we do well, in examining Hegel's politics, to restrict them to appropriate scope and purpose. "Unhappy consciousness" is, to be sure, anchored in the forfeits of Judaism and Christianity, but it also refers to the isolation of the artist or political actor in a Philistine world. That world must, in the first instance, be understood as Hegel's own.

Turn-of-the-nineteenth-century Germany was indeed the land of the "unhappy consciousness." Estate society was inharmonious; tensions of reason, faith, and ignorance were sharp; the regional economies were archaic; and alien standards challenged individual talent.<sup>1</sup> There is a sense in which the various philosophico-historical contortions of Lessing,

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, W. H. Bruford, *Germany in the Eighteenth Century: The Social Background of the Literary Revival* (Cambridge, 1965); and Henri Brunschwig, *La Crise de l'état prussien à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1947). For the German "unhappy consciousness," see Alexandre Koyré, "Hegel à Iéna," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*, V (1935), 409-439.



Kant, Herder, Schiller, and Hegel, among others, can be regarded as perplexed cosmic echoes of the "German problem." And one does not need a Marxian frame of analysis to do so. The awareness among German intellectuals of building a high culture, a "classicism," and conceivably of forging keys for unlocking the secrets of the philosophical universe clashed with their all-too-human sensation of local space-time discordancies. Yet, paradoxically, the intellectuals came to recognize that these very tensions of life and work, politics and art, arid fact and airy ideal, made their innovative flights not only the more urgent, but the more universally valid.

It is the lag between the observed and the speculated, between the felt and the thought, that sociologically triggers the magic of the modern dialectic. "I am of good cheer," Fichte writes to Jacobi in 1804, "for I know that new life can come only from complete decay."<sup>2</sup> A happy people does not feel the compulsive need to think dialectically or to engineer its salvation out of the "dark moments" of its own sufferance. That mode of discourse was neither the invention of one man nor a discovery made in the logician's laboratory. It was the atmosphere of a whole generation's attempt to make sense out of its fruitful but miserable predicament. In its multiple forms, it became the collective *explicans* of the *explicandum* of German culture at a moment when that latter was waxing mightily and testing its mettle against the nationless standards of the European "republic of letters." It was the negation and surpassing of the correct Boileau, the "historical plain" Locke, the malicious and secular Bayle, the imperialistic Voltaire, the slumber-breaking Hume, and some local epigoni. It was the mind's rebellion against a mind whose cheerful hedonistic life plan vouchsafed the Germans no self-respect.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Hans Schulz, ed., *Fichtes Briefwechsel*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1925), II, 381-382 (31 March 1804).

<sup>3</sup> Hegel capsulized a component of this reaction sensitively, if opaquely, in the *Phenomenology*: "Enlightenment upsets the house-

Of the great figures, Goethe practically alone surmounted this tension by finding an intuitive place for it in his all-encompassing view of nature. Thus Goethe's genius allowed him to remain a complete European. Others grasped it as a self-revealing process, absorbing first their own energies, and finally absorbing nature itself, as well as other cultures. It was not that the German intellectual suddenly saw himself as highest and best as a result of his discovery of reconciliation in disunion. But he proposed himself earnestly as universal pathfinder in the disturbed twilight of European rationalist culture. There was a conviction that something ultimate needed to be harvested. As Schiller jotted in notes for an unfinished poem: "the day of the German is the harvest of time as a whole."<sup>4</sup> Hegel himself had no pretense of raising a specifically German culture on the shipwreck of wider Europeanism—as should be clear to anyone who ponders his philosophy of history. Yet his destiny was to be the highest spokesman of a national philosophical style connected to an extremely disembodied and rootless political situation. Different but analogous frustrations in modern life make Hegel intellectually congenial to us today.

In turning abruptly to the specific linkage of Schiller and Hegel, there can be no thought of eradicating this complexity and the role of many persons in it. For everything, in an intricate way, contributes to the pattern. No doubt the exploration of the intellectual relationship of two individuals, however important, is an arbitrary slice of culture.

---

hold arrangements, which spirit carries out in the house of faith, by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of the Here and Now." Since this is unstable, there ensues a revolution of thought, bringing about "absolute freedom, the stage at which the spirit . . . passes over into another region, the land of the inner or subjective moral consciousness." Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, tr. J. Baillie (London, 1949), p. 512; *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1952), pp. 349–350.

<sup>4</sup> Sketches for the unfinished poem "Deutsche Grösse" (1797), Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. C. Höfer (Munich and Leipzig, n.d.), XIII, 279.

Nevertheless, I am proposing something more paradigmatic than a routine who-what-whom analysis. I wish to show how decisively, and with what nuance, the spadework of Schiller influenced Hegel in his quest to provide a realistic expression, if not finally a solution, of the German problem.

Hegel does not supply overabundant references to Schiller in his writings, except, of course, in the *Lectures on the History of Aesthetics*. Presumably Hegel regarded and—at critical distance—revered Schiller as an artist and man of letters, not as a formidable speculative thinker. To the extent that Schiller philosophized, he was either an aesthete (a superior one) or a *haut vulgarisateur*; and we are reminded here of Hegel's scathing comments about *Populärphilosophie*, to the address of Fichte and certain of the Romantics.<sup>5</sup> Schiller was also a historian (he was appointed to a chair of History at Jena in 1789). Here, too, Hegel had little to learn. However, he may have incurred one oblique debt. The influence comes as much from Schiller's representation of heroes in historical drama as from any academic writings. From the study of these plays, Hegel may have clarified his idea of real, as opposed to false, "world-historical" figures, and the manner of operation of the *List der Vernunft*:

Such objects of a world-wide policy, such as a Karl Moor or a Wallenstein pursue, are as a rule not accomplished at the hands of a single individual by the simple means that other men are induced to obey and co-operate; they are carried into effect by the commanding personality, partly acting in conjunction with the will of many others,

<sup>5</sup> Hegel, *Erste Druckschriften*, ed. G. Lasson (Berlin, 1911), pp. 126–127; letter to Niethammer, 20 May 1808, in *Briefe von und an Hegel*, 4 vols., ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1952); Hegel, *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Stuttgart, 1936), p. 371; Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel* (New York, 1965), p. 450.



and in part in opposition to, or at least on lines of which they have no knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

Here it should be noted that Hegel's interpretation of the Romantic hero by his own canons of history and art suggests a debasement of tragic purpose. The remorseless collisions of fate typical of Greek drama are replaced by an explosion of personality operating not in a medium of destiny but in an ironic vacuum of ignorance and false color. Schiller's dramatic heroes practice a deceptive and destructive kind of self-legislation. And, as Hegel concludes, "the style of Schiller . . . has shown an increasing tendency to violent methods, the tempestuous expiation of which lack the true core of reality for their bases."<sup>7</sup>

But it would be highly misleading to see Schiller merely as an important figure whom Hegel read, knew slightly,<sup>8</sup> and acknowledged as a pillar of contemporary culture. As I will show, Hegel drew upon Schiller not only for the misquoted strophe at the end of the *Phenomenology*, but for some of his crucial portraits of *Geist*. And, beyond this, he assimilated certain cultural and political problems raised by Schiller, and made them his own.

When Schiller began to beat his path toward German classicism with his famous poem "Die Götter Griechenlands," Hegel was eighteen years old. When Schiller summarized his classical mood of pregnant nostalgia and sublime political refusal in the first publication of *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (1795), Hegel was twenty-five. The most omnivorous years of the young Swabian philosopher-to-be were lived out in the company of Schiller's intellectual traverse to "classicism."

<sup>6</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, 4 vols., tr. F.P.B. Osmaston (London, 1920), IV, 333.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>8</sup> There is no existing correspondence between Hegel and Schiller; but there is evidence that Hegel was a subject of interest for Schiller and Goethe; cf. Karl Rosenkranz, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegels Leben* (reprint, Darmstadt, 1963), pp. 222-223.

From a critical standpoint, "The Gods of Greece" must be accounted a *tour de force*, whose melodic power far outstrips the poet's commitment to the vanished splendor of Hellas. Or at least Greece seems so lustrously divine because we know that Germany is so shabby.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, Schiller knew next to nothing about Greek culture when he wrote the lyric. No matter: the poem responded to chronic pangs of longing. It deeply affected Hegel, and did much to fortify his (and Hölderlin's) own intoxication with that Aegean "paradise of the human spirit." The mature Hegel would continue to say of these verses: "Schiller's pathos is always true, no less than poignant, and the result of profound reflection."<sup>10</sup> The reflection, however, was really not on Greece, but on a Germany at the antipodes of Greece.

This poignancy leaped from verse to prose in the sixth letter of the *Ästhetische Erziehung*. That work, a tapestry of many themes (some of which I will analyze), received mixed reviews in the German intellectual community. Goethe admired it (so, surprisingly, did Kant, who found it "vortrefflich"); but Klopstock complained of its "dreadful pretensions," and Herder accused it of "Kantian sins."<sup>11</sup> The young Hegel was jubilantly unreserved. "It is a masterpiece," he wrote his friend Schelling.<sup>12</sup>

Hegel's mind was churning to catch up with Schiller's spiritual evolution. The question here was not the idolatry of Greece but the assessment of the French Revolution.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Hegel's own remarks: "Our cities have cramped, stinking streets—the rooms are narrow, with dark wainscotting and dark windows—great halls that are vile and oppressive when you are in them . . . the joy of the Greeks [was] purer—happier—more temperate—more light-hearted—the Germans never drank a carefree Socratic goblet." Hegel, *Theologische Jugendschriften*, ed. H. Nohl (Tübingen, 1907), p. 358.

<sup>10</sup> Hegel, *Fine Art*, II, 267.

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby, *Friedrich Schiller: On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (Oxford, 1967), Introduction, pp. cxxxi–cxxxiv.

<sup>12</sup> *Briefe von und an Hegel*, I, 24 (16 April 1795).

Could the French become the Greeks of the modern age, or could they not? In the same letter Hegel gives vent to an unusual burst of militancy: "Philosophers will demonstrate the dignity of man; the peoples will learn to feel it, and they will not be content to demand their rights that had been cast in the dust, but will seize them and put them to use."<sup>13</sup> The declaration exhales Fichte's Jena creed; but it also strikingly recalls the address of Marquis Posa to the King in *Don Carlos*:

. . . Man is greater  
Than you esteem him. He will burst the chains  
Of a long slumber, and reclaim once more  
His just and hallowed rights. . . .<sup>14</sup>

However, if—as there is always some danger in assuming—Schiller lavished his beliefs wholeheartedly on any of his characters, it is clear that whatever enthusiasm he might have possessed for plebeian and violent revolutionary freedom had been dispelled by the French "richtungslose Köpfe," who had turned reason into mob action in the September massacres of 1792.<sup>15</sup> Subsequent letters make no secret of Schiller's repudiation of the Revolution.<sup>16</sup> He turned increasingly to speculations about the moral improvement of man through the apprehension and practice of art. When he founded his journal the *Horen* in 1795, where the *Ästhetische Erziehung* was first printed, it was with the express exclusion of political subjects.<sup>17</sup>

Hegel knew that Schiller had been made an honorary citizen of the French Republic in 1792, and he had certainly

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Don Carlos*, III, x.

<sup>15</sup> Letter of 21 December 1792 to Korner, in Friedrich Schiller, *Schillers Briefe*, ed. Fritz Jonas (Stuttgart, Leipzig, Berlin, and Vienna, 1892–1896), III, 232.

<sup>16</sup> Letter of 13 July 1793 to Duke Friedrich Christian, *ibid.*, III, 333.

<sup>17</sup> Letter of 25 January 1795 to F. Jacobi, *ibid.*, IV, 110.



read *Don Carlos*. We may presume that his collision with the *Ästhetische Erziehung* in 1795 bred a response parallel to Schiller's. Although the manuscripts of the last half-decade of the eighteenth century (the so-called "early theological writings") have often been judged radical in their appreciation of the religious phenomenon, they breathe no further hint that Hegel continued to admire the French experiment. His later and, in my opinion, bittersweet praise of 1789, the dawning of the idea that "*nous* governed the world,"<sup>18</sup> is to be taken both as the nostalgia of dashed hopes and a warrant of the ironic *Aufhebung* of spirit in its progress toward a higher crystallization. No longer, after he had read and approved Schiller's letters, could Hegel believe that the French tempest had anything to do with the revival of Athenian joy and integrity. Rather, it was the perversion of any hope of community based on concrete freedom and "Schönheit." Hegel had made a first foray into political writing in 1794. Now, he too turned to more inward matters (art, religion, love). Strictly speaking, his never-failing political interest did not resurface until his philosophical premises were relatively clear.

In 1795 Hegel had not, as yet, discriminately forsworn the powerful influence of Kant. It goes without saying that the type of critique launched against his illustrious master in the *Philosophie des Rechts*, where Kant's tendencies, on a theoretical plane, are held equivalent to the practical excesses of the French in 1793–1794, was far from his mind.<sup>19</sup> Still, we can imagine that Schiller's ambivalent use of Kantianism in the *Ästhetische Erziehung* helped to wean the receptive mind of Hegel away from the abstract propensities of Kant's ethical system and his drive to reduce religion to ethics. The real Hegelian break with Kant comes in 1797, upon the publication of the *Metaphysik der Sitten*. Here-

<sup>18</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, tr. J. Sibree (New York, 1956), p. 447.

<sup>19</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, ed. and tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), Introduction, p. 22; *Philosophy of History*, p. 443.

upon the Grecophile and community-minded Hegel perceives at last that there is no rapport between his own longings for a *sittlich* culture and Kant's austere treatment of duties and rights.<sup>20</sup> In a subsequent period, mainly passed in Frankfurt, with Schiller probably on his mind and his Grecomaniac friend Hölderlin at his elbow, Hegel began to compose the brilliant essay "The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate," where Kant is directly bound to the systems of religious dominance that he himself had pilloried.<sup>21</sup> Also, we have a philosophical manuscript from the summer of 1796, where Schiller is summoned into the breach.<sup>22</sup>

Before returning to any more narrative analysis, it will be useful to discriminate the fashions by which the mature Hegel will weigh and value Schiller's achievement. Fundamentally, there are three aspects of Schiller that Hegel takes into account. The division made here is not as artificial as might appear at first glance. Schiller's own career, quite possible to unify by reference to some such concept as "liberty" or "humanity," was still subject to changes of gear. On the other hand, Hegel's method is typically an allusive one, exhibited most forcefully in the *Phenomenology*. The Hegelian "ego" is a "we" as much as an "I." He rarely deals integrally with the work of persons, but rather with the movement of spirit as expressed in various culture-clusters or *Gestalten*.

The first Schiller is the Romantic dramatist, the *enfant terrible* of the *Sturm und Drang*, not essentially modified by his more historical and classical plays. This Schiller is the

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Stuttgart, 1936), 280–281.

<sup>21</sup> Hegel, *Friedrich Hegel on Christianity: Early Theological Writings*, ed. and tr. T. M. Knox (New York, 1961), p. 214: "In the Kantian conception of virtue . . . the universal becomes the master and the particular the mastered." But: "Truth is something free which we neither master nor are mastered by. . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>22</sup> Hegel, "Erstes Systemprogramm des deutschen Idealismus," *Dokumente*, p. 219. See notes 76–77, below.

ardent apostle of humanity—the Rousseau with a dagger—who can grant one of his most popular characters the following tirade:

Am I to squeeze my body in stays, and straightlace my will in the trammels of law? What might have risen to an eagle's flight has been reduced to a snail's pace by law. Never yet has law formed a great man; 'tis liberty that breeds giants and heroes.<sup>23</sup>

Needless to say, this manner of expression is totally repugnant to the mature Hegel, who prefers cosmic tragedies where inevitable laws collide, and where the diction follows the tragic action, rather than seeking to create it. "Modern tragedy," Hegel asserts, "makes . . . the personal intimacy of character—the character, that is, which is no purely individual and vital embodiment of ethical forces in the classical sense—its peculiar object and content."<sup>24</sup> Hegel castigates this posture, ideal-typically, as "the good heart" (a mood not unfamiliar to our own times). His most searching exploration of the effect is in the *Phenomenology*:

The agent's own immediate individuality constitutes the content of moral action; and the form of moral action is just this very self as a pure process, viz. as the process of knowing, in other words, is private individual conviction. . . . Duty is no longer the universal appearing over against and opposed to the self; duty is known to have in this condition of separation and opposition no validity. It is now the law which exists for the sake of the self, and not the law for the sake of which the self exists.<sup>25</sup>

The "gutes Herz" has its counterpart in the "schöne Seele." They are aspects of the same Romantic tendency to

<sup>23</sup> Karl Moor, in Friedrich Schiller, *Die Räuber*, I, ii.

<sup>24</sup> Hegel, *Fine Art*, IV, 331; cf. *Philosophy of Right*, para. 126A, p. 85.

<sup>25</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology*, tr. J. Baillie, pp. 648–649; ed. J. Hoffmeister, p. 449.



force one's convictions out upon the world—if necessary, in the form of retributive violence—and to withdraw into one's snail shell if the world becomes too oppressive.

Thus a second Schiller, withdrawn and nonviolent, also presents a scene in Hegel's dialectic of theory and action. Here we see the artist who retreats from society for fear of having his integrity damaged. It is interesting, in this regard, to compare a passage from Schiller with one from the *Philosophie des Rechts*. "The poet," Schiller writes, "must live in an ideal world . . . [and] must find refuge in the realm of ideals from the wretchedness of reality."<sup>26</sup> A more detached Hegel re-echoes: "When the existing world of freedom has become faithless to the will of better men, that will fails to find itself in the duties there recognized and must try to find in the ideal world of the inner life alone the harmony which actuality has lost."<sup>27</sup> Hegel is describing, not prescribing.

Hegel, too, knew periods of enforced inner retirement in his career (conspicuously between 1807 and 1816), and he heralded the coincidence of the Restoration and his appointment to the chair of Philosophy at Berlin by asserting that the mind could turn public and at last burst free of its encapsulating prison.<sup>28</sup>

Schiller's own haunted involution had contained, in sequence, two debilitating enemies: the hated tyranny exercised by arbitrary princely government (*mon plaisir*) and the mob action connected with the misfiring of the French Revolution. A letter to Herder repeats the constant refrain of escape:

I see no other salvation for the poetic genius than to withdraw from the real world, and to aim rather at the strictest separation instead of a coalition that may become

<sup>26</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Schillers Persönlichkeit*, ed. Max F. Hecker and Julius Petersen (Weimar, 1904–1908), II, 39–40.

<sup>27</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, para. 138A, p. 92.

<sup>28</sup> Hegel, "Rede zum Antritt . . .," *Berliner Schriften*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1956), p. 3.

dangerous to him. It seems, precisely, a great advantage to me that he creates in his own world, and remains through the Greek myths related to a far, strange and idealistic age, since reality can only besmirch him.<sup>29</sup>

Though Hegel understood full well the lure of Schiller's plaintive introspection, he regarded it as the opposite side of the subjective coin from "the good heart." Cripple the pretensions of a Romantic *Weltschöpfer* and there you will find a quivering poet, full of the certitude of "conscience" (*Gewissen*). Hegel's own manner of reconciliation with the world would shun both active and passive extremes. Schiller finally opted for art; and, as it is said, *ars longa, vita brevis*. Hegel, however, strategically preserved his connoisseurship of Greek art by burying it in the dialectic of "absolute knowledge" beneath his own speculative philosophy. Thus he retained a systematic confidence in his own species of mediation. "Once the realm of thought is revolutionized," he wrote to Niethammer, "reality cannot hold out."<sup>30</sup> Hegel was far from despising Schiller's project; he merely demonstrated that it was impossible—impossible for man ever to become artistic again, in the highest sense, especially because he was compelled to be withdrawn. Hegelian man could not aspire to joy; he could aspire only to the passionless pleasure of self-understanding. Further, to arrive at this terminal of world-historical contemplation, he had to pass through that arduous "speculative Good Friday" of the *Aufhebung* of the Christian religion.<sup>31</sup> He could not proceed from an Arcadia that both Hegel and Schiller revered to a final Elysium.<sup>32</sup> His turning again to this world would be a sober, in some sense painful, resurrection of his memory of all culture. Surely it could not be, or not yet be, that boisterous *praxis* described by the young Karl Marx as a

<sup>29</sup> Schiller, *Schillers Briefe*, IV, 314, 4 November 1795.

<sup>30</sup> Hegel, *Briefe von und an Hegel*, I, 253 (28 October 1808).

<sup>31</sup> Hegel, "Glauben und Wissen," *Erste Druckschriften*, in *fine*.

<sup>32</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1893–1894), XII, 224–228.

"Shrovetide of philosophy, whether it be clothed in the dog's garb of the Cynic, the vestment of the Alexandrine, or the gauzy spring tunic of the Epicurean."<sup>33</sup> Good Friday can scarcely be Shrovetide.

Finally, there is a third manifestation of Schiller. This is the one of immediate philosophical—dare I say methodological?—importance to Hegel at a critical moment in his intellectual life. This is Schiller as diagnostician and healer, that human reconciler of "sublime soul and profound genius." It is also Schiller as historical dialectician, who manages to break the stranglehold of Kant's coercive ethics of duty and to glimpse a way in which the consciousness might be made "happy." This Schiller receives small pride of place in Hegel's *Enzyklopädie*<sup>34</sup> and a glowing encomium in the fine arts lectures:

It is Schiller who must be credited with the important service of having broken through the Kantian subjectivity and abstractness of thought, and of having ventured the attempt to pass beyond the same by comprehending in thought the principles of unity and reconciliation as the truth, and giving artistic realization to that truth.<sup>35</sup>

Hegel is not merely extolling Schiller's theory of art or lauding his view of art as a reconciling experience (Kant had said as much in the *Critique of Judgment*, but had referred to the contemplation rather than the practice of art). More importantly, he is indicating that Schiller had the sense of method by which German idealism would continue to advance, inadequately in Schelling's hands, adequately in his own. It is with this third aspect of the Schiller-Hegel relationship that I shall be mainly concerned in the remainder of this essay.

<sup>33</sup> Karl Marx, "Notes on the Doctoral Dissertation (1839–41)," *Writings of the Young Karl Marx on Philosophy and Society*, ed. and tr. Lloyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat (New York, 1967), p. 52.

<sup>34</sup> Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (1830), ed. F. Nicolin and O. Pöggeler (Hamburg, 1959), p. 80.

<sup>35</sup> Hegel, *Fine Art*, I, 84.





We now require a closer look at Schiller's treatment of the problem of human integrity.

Of the two great German lyricist-dramatists of the "Golden Age," Goethe was the more natural and comprehensive genius. Goethe absorbed fascinating stray matter as the Chinese Empire absorbed conquering races, and he did so with relative lack of inner stress, which, in my opinion, partly falsifies the parallel drawn by Karl Löwith between him and that other great synthesizer, Hegel, who battled most painfully for his different kind of achievement.<sup>36</sup> Schiller was a man of passion and a master of its poetic uses. But it was more a passion of either pathos or abstract principle than a passion of nature. Schiller admired and envied Goethe's natural integrating drive, paying him one of the highest compliments a superior artist can bestow on another in the ninth letter of the *Ästhetische Erziehung*. But he was aware that he himself was deficient in Goethe's more classical form of sensibility. This made Schiller more a romanticist and moralist, and a purveyor rather than a synthesizer of the moods of his time.

He was always a relentless capturer of these moods from available sources. Rousseau's work kindled his youthful hatred of princely authority and his impassioned awareness of the corruption of the age. He quickly passed beyond the brittle deism of the *Aufklärung* to an appreciation of the depths of religious sentiment in human existence (not as a believer; rather as an observer, somewhat like Durkheim),<sup>37</sup> but he never ceased to regard the "positive" institutions of the Church as arrogant and immoral forces in their contem-

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche* (New York, 1964), pp. 3-29.

<sup>37</sup> "Religion," Schiller tells us—in a passage foreshadowing a point that Hegel will later stress—"reaches the individual from its lofty abstract region through its appearance in pictures and stories, and its appeal to the senses." "Die Schaubühne als eine moralische Anstalt betrachtet" (1784), *Sämtliche Werke*, XI, 90.

porary surroundings. He assimilated the religio-historical speculation of Lessing, the panidealism of Herder, the sociology of Adam Ferguson. And finally, rather late in his career, he plunged into Kant.

Schiller was a purveyor but not a scavenger. Basic ideas and mottos remained relatively untarnished during his career, though they were deepened by reading, living, and artistic experience. It did not require either the French Revolution or Kant to teach Schiller his idea of freedom, which, from the outset, had civic-political, moral, and artistic components. The disparate possibilities—or impossibility—of conjugating these kinds of liberty became the source of Schiller's problem: no less in a play like *Fiesko* or *Tell* than in the *Gesetzgebung des Lykurgus und Solon* or the *Ästhetische Erziehung*. Schiller's ambivalent withholding from critical philosophy stems directly from Kant's refusal to grant a passage between his pristine and all-demanding moral liberty and the sensuous modes of life.

It does not seem that Schiller had more than a casual command of Kant's philosophy until 1791, although Reinhold, Fichte's predecessor at Jena, had introduced him to the historical essays in 1787.<sup>38</sup> Thus Schiller began to devour Kant's writings at a moment when the master was publishing his *Critique of Judgment*, and three years after he had dealt definitively with the basis of ethics in his second Critique. These appear to be the works that captivated Schiller the most. Evidently he went at his studies painstakingly; a letter informs us: "I am now working on Kantian philosophy with great fervor and wish I could talk about it with you every night."<sup>39</sup> During this period Schiller ceased to write poetry and became absorbed in history. However, exaggeration got the better of him a few years later, when he addressed one of his *Xenien* epigrams (1796) to Kant:

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Deric Regin, *Freedom and Dignity: The Historical and Philosophical Thought of Schiller* (The Hague, 1965), p. 56.

<sup>39</sup> Letter of 1 January 1792 to Korner, *Schillers Briefe*, III, 186.

Zwei Jahrzehnte kostest du mir: zehn Jahre verlor ich  
Dich zu begreifen, und zehn, mich zu befreien von dir.<sup>40</sup>

If, for the the German artistic intellectuals of the 1790s, Kant was not to be swallowed whole, neither was he simply an interesting philosopher to be taken up and put down. He was, according to Hölderlin, the "Moses" of the German cultural effort.<sup>41</sup> The severe side of Kant, or Kant "according to the letter," abolished the shallowness of the *Aufklärung* by decomposing it and going beyond it. And there was a "Kantianism of the spirit," too, most pronounced in the "Aesthetic Judgment," that helped to shake the eighteenth century into the nineteenth and to serve, often in immoderate forms, as the philosophical linchpin between classical and romantic Germany. Schiller found himself at this same point of tension. While he rejected Kant's morality as humanly incomplete and one-sided, he accepted Kantianism as a tool and regarded himself as extending its "spirit," not as betraying its essence.<sup>42</sup> Kant, as he put it in his essay *Über Anmut und Würde* (1793), "was the Draco of his age, because it seemed to him to be not yet worthy of a Solon."<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Schiller had accepted Kant's thesis of the phenomenal effect of "unsocial sociability" from the essay *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View* (1784). As he writes in *Über das Erhabene* (1801): "The world as a historical object is basically nothing but the conflict of natural forces with each other and

<sup>40</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Aus dem Xenienbuch*, No. 514, *Werke* (Zurich, 1967), I, 329: "Two decades you cost me; I spent ten years getting to the bottom of you, and ten fighting free of you."

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Hölderlin's letter to his brother, 1 January 1799, cited by Richard Kroner, *Von Kant bis Hegel*, 2 vols. (Tübingen, 1961), I, 3.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Letter to Jacobi, 29 June 1795, *Schillers Briefe*, IV, 200: "Whenever it is a question of merely demolishing or attacking other people's dogmas, I have proceeded on strictly Kantian lines. Only where I am concerned to build something new of my own do I find myself in opposition to him."

<sup>43</sup> Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke*, XI, 219.



with human freedom, and history is our report of the success of this struggle."<sup>44</sup> These general mechanics, brilliantly modified in the *Ästhetische Erziehung* to account for the sublation of harmonious Greece in the "manifoldness" of modern civilization, became a direct donation to the Hegelian philosophy of history.

Most of what flows from the *Ästhetische Erziehung* is prefigured in Schiller's earlier writings, especially in a series of correspondence with his patron Duke Friedrich Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, begun in July 1793. The events of the French Revolution (the Girondists fell in early June) are vividly in the background, and dispose Schiller toward his new refashioning of the elements of liberty. "A theory of aesthetics," he writes, "is not so distant from the need of the present as it may seem, and . . . the subject merits the attention of political philosophers, because any radical improvement of a nation must begin with the ennobling of character under the guidance of beauty and dignity."<sup>45</sup> In *Über Anmut und Würde* he declares: "When neither reason dominating the senses nor the senses dominating reason can coexist with beauty of expression, then that psychological state where reason and morality, duty and inclination, concur will be the condition under which the beauty of play (*des Spieles*) results."<sup>46</sup> How ardent the German intellectuals were to improve and liberate man without the awful odor of tyrannicide and riot lingering over their efforts! Profound practical disillusion jarring against the residues of optimistic faith inherited from their ancestors turned them inward. And the question was how, how far, and how fast to moralize the human being.

There can be no question here of giving even a truncated résumé of the themes that Schiller draws together in the

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, XII, 277.

<sup>45</sup> Letter of 13 July 1793 to Duke Friedrich Christian, *Schillers Briefe*, III, 339.

<sup>46</sup> Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke*, XI, 215.

*Ästhetische Erziehung*, which is, in any case, one of his most familiar works. Nevertheless, a few of them merit our special attention for the contact that they make with developing Hegelian thought. This can be done most conveniently by furnishing some passages of the text with brief commentary. The commentary itself aims, insofar as possible, not to repeat excellent analyses already made elsewhere.<sup>47</sup>

(1) The immediate historical background of the *Letters* we may judge to be the defeat of reason in the course of the French Revolution.

The fabric of the natural [that is, coercive] State is tottering, its rotting foundations giving way, and there seems to be a physical possibility of setting law upon the throne, of honouring man at last as an end in himself, and making true freedom the basis of political associations. Vain hope! The moral possibility is lacking, and a moment so prodigal of opportunity finds a generation unprepared to receive it.<sup>48</sup>

Schiller had commented elsewhere, in a strictly political and constitutional vein, that between the weakness of popular rule and the limitation of aristocratic despotism, there existed a middle ground. Finding it, he said, "is the most difficult problem, which the coming centuries will solve."<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> The new and comprehensive introduction in Wilkinson and Willoughby's critical edition of the *Aesthetic Education* is a mine of useful information; Walter Kaufmann has developed the Schiller-Hegel connection with accustomed sensitivity in his *Hegel*, pp. 46-58. I am of course indebted to these works as well as to a number of other briefer commentaries. All subsequent citations of the *Aesthetic Education* are from the edition cited above (Oxford, 1967). I am in strong disagreement with the conclusion of Theodor Haering; see his *Hegel: Sein Wollen und Sein Werk* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1929), I, 467.

<sup>48</sup> Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, Letter V, sec. 2, p. 25.

<sup>49</sup> Friedrich Schiller, "Die Gesetzgebung des Lykurgus und Solon," in *Sämtliche Werke* (Munich, 1958), IV, 784.

What, on the most general plane, accounts for this abortion of hope? The fact that physical man and moral man are not stabilized, but driven in different directions. The problem: "How, then, are we to restore the unity of human nature which seems to be utterly destroyed by this primary and radical opposition?"<sup>50</sup>

(2) The condemnation of the French Revolution is also a critique of the Enlightenment. "Material needs reign supreme and bend a degraded humanity beneath their tyrannical yoke. Utility is the great idol of the age, to which all powers are in thrall."<sup>51</sup> This has had the effect of degrading men in all walks of life: "Among the lower and more numerous classes we are confronted with crude lawless instincts . . . hastening with ungovernable fury to their animal satisfaction. . . . The cultivated classes, on the other hand, offer the even more repugnant spectacle of lethargy, and of a depravation of character which offends the more because culture itself is its source."<sup>52</sup> This is a clear prefiguration of Hegel's scenario of "absolute Bildung" in the *Phenomenology*.

(3) How are we to understand modern man's ugly predicament? We can do this through the philosophical resources of history if we can locate a model of original harmony. Such a model is indeed available: the Greeks. "To the Greek nature is never merely nature; . . . to him reason is never merely reason."<sup>53</sup> The two poles of his psychic existence are reciprocal (Schiller's usual word is *Wechselwirkung*, a concept borrowed from Fichte, but evidently possessing an earlier cachet in theological and mystical writings). "The Greeks," Schiller asserts, "put us to shame

<sup>50</sup> Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, Letter XIII, sec. 1, p. 85.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter II, sec. 3, p. 7. Cf. Fichte's description of the "age of completed sinfulness" in *Characteristics of the Present Age, The Popular Writings of Johann Gottlieb Fichte*, 2 vols., ed. William Smith (London, 1889), II, 9 ff.

<sup>52</sup> Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, Letter V, secs. 4-5, pp. 15-27.

<sup>53</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Über Anmut und Würde, Sämtliche Werke*, XI, 184.



not only by a simplicity to which our age is a stranger; they are at the same time our rivals, indeed often our models, in those very excellences with which we are wont to console ourselves for the unnaturalness of our manners."<sup>54</sup> Why do we stand the comparison so badly? Because we have intellectualized ourselves away from this healing harmony: "Why was the individual Greek qualified to be the representative of his age, and why can no single modern venture as much? Because it was from all-unifying nature that the former, and from the all-dividing intellect that the latter, received their respective forms."<sup>55</sup> The idea is, of course, of much more general attribution (Herder's *Ideen* might claim primacy); and it forms the basis for Hegel's pre-1805 notion of *Sittlichkeit*.

(4) Greece had to vanish; and though the emotions may cling to it, the intellect must accept its vanishing. For "it was civilization itself which inflicted this wound upon modern man."<sup>56</sup> Glorious Hellas was a dead end: "With the Greeks humanity undoubtedly reached a maximum of excellence which could neither be maintained at that level nor rise any higher."<sup>57</sup> This is to be regarded as the unfolding of a destiny, advancing by means of a historical process such as Kant conceived: "If the manifold potentialities in man were ever to be developed, there was no other way but to pit them the one against the other. This antagonism of faculties and functions is the great instrument of civilization—but it is only the instrument."<sup>58</sup> Struggle and dividedness are man's means; they are not his perpetual lot. He must seek and find a higher harmony.

(5) But what has been our experience in the meantime? The fashionable word is alienation. "State and Church, laws and customs, were now torn asunder; enjoyment was divorced from labour, the means from the end, the effort from the reward. Everlastingly chained to a single little frag-

<sup>54</sup> Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, Letter VI, sec. 12, p. 31.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter VI, sec. 5, p. 33.      <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter VI, sec. 6, p. 33.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter VI, sec. 11, p. 39.      <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter VI, sec. 12, p. 41.

ment of the whole, man himself develops into nothing but a fragment."<sup>59</sup>

(6) Alienation is not just a source of misery and bewilderment; it can be analyzed in terms of Kantian faculty psychology, and it leads to the conclusion that "it is only through beauty that man makes his way to freedom."<sup>60</sup> Man is both "natural" (an object of science) and "moral" (a subject of freedom); the burning political question raised by the French experience turns on this:

[The] Natural State (as we may term any political body whose organization derives originally from forces and not from laws [in the Kantian sense]) is . . . at variance with man as a moral being, for whom the only Law should be to act in conformity with law. But it will just suffice for man as a physical being; for he only gives himself laws in order to come to terms with forces. But physical man does in fact exist, whereas the existence of moral man is as yet problematic. If, then, Reason does away with the Natural State (as she of necessity must if she would put her own in its place), she jeopardizes the physical man who actually exists [and] risks the very existence of society for a merely hypothetical (even though morally necessary) ideal of society.<sup>61</sup>

Although the problem is posed here in Kantian terms, there is also a forward glance toward the Hegelian critique of an experiment that ended in a "maximum of frightfulness and terror." However, we may anticipate by acknowledging that if Hegel, too, deplored the mere negation of the physical realm of force in a fanatic grasping for law, he soon abandoned Schiller's aesthetic solution.

(7) That solution is, however, in method most Hegelian. It is the way of mediation. One must locate "a third character [akin to natural and moral] which might prepare the way for a transition from the rule of mere force to the rule

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter VI, sec. 7, p. 35.      <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter II, sec. 5, p. 9.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter III, sec. 3, p. 13.

of law.”<sup>62</sup> If man can become inwardly whole through this process of mediation, “he will be able to preserve his individuality however much he may universalize his conduct, and the State will be merely the interpreter of his own finest instinct, a clearer formulation of his own sense of what is right.”<sup>63</sup> This sentence, somewhat differently interpreted, might exactly describe Hegel’s position—a collapsing of all “pure practical reason” (law, morality, religion) into the functional harmonies of a historically developed and rational state. Here, however, Schiller’s prescription runs on very different lines from that of the mature Hegel. For Schiller denies that politics can avail at all. What is sauce for the Greeks is not for the Germans: “we must continue to regard every attempt at political reform as untimely . . . as long as the split within man is not healed.”<sup>64</sup> Further, “we should, presumably, have to seek out some instrument not provided by the State, and to open up living springs which, whatever the political corruption, would remain clear and pure. . . . This instrument is Fine Art.”<sup>65</sup> The political result of Schiller’s exploration, if there can be said to be one, is something called the Aesthetic State, which rests, as he explains, on “taste.” And where is it to be found? What more substantiality can it be said to have than, for example, Kant’s moral law? “As a need, it exists in every finely attuned soul; as a realized fact, we are likely to find it, like the pure Church and the pure Republic, only in some few chosen circles.”<sup>66</sup> It seems nothing more than a purified *Gelehrtenrepublik* and an ultimate denial of practical solutions for politics.

(8) Despite the vagueness of Schiller’s point of arrival, there is more than a suggestion of the problems inherent in politics treated as an exercise of art. The chief problem in the educational or restorative effort is, simply, humanism versus Machiavellianism.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter III, sec. 5, p. 15.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter IV, sec. 5, p. 21.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter VII, sec. 1, p. 45.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter IX, sec. 1, p. 55.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter XXVII, sec. 12, p. 219.



When the artisan lays hands upon the formless mass in order to shape it to his ends, he has no scruple in doing it violence. . . . When the artist lays hands upon the same mass, he has just as little scruple in doing it violence; but he avoids showing it. . . . With the pedagogic or the political artist things are very different indeed. For him Man is at once the material on which he works and the goal towards which he strives.<sup>67</sup>

Apparently the Greeks had no such problem of creative violence. But modern man, who needs to be reunited, may face one. As against Goethe, the "ideal artist," proposed as a model in the ninth letter, there is still the question of political art. And it is little wonder that Fichte, Hegel, and other writers were sporadically tempted by Machiavellian solutions. Schiller's historical dramas wrestle awkwardly with the same theme; a possible answer, and one compatible with a certain ideal of Hegel, is that proposed in *Wilhelm Tell*, where the community is the leading character, and it is *Volksgeist* that secures freedom.

(9) Is aesthetic man the instrument or the goal in Schiller's letters? This is a fairly ponderous problem, and it revolves around the ambiguity of his use of the concept "freedom." In the third letter, Schiller speaks of "elevating physical necessity into moral necessity,"<sup>68</sup> which is presumably freedom. But, insofar as the famous play-impulse is the domain of aesthetic man, and "man only plays when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and he is only fully a human being when he plays,"<sup>69</sup> there appears to be a contradiction. Actually it seems that only he who is aesthetic can be moral, and that only he who is moral can be free. Aestheticism animates morality and softens nature, permitting Schiller to posit "the greatest fullness of existence [combined] with the highest autonomy and freedom."<sup>70</sup> The Sovereign Good becomes a *Wechselwirkung*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter IV, sec. 4, p. 19.      <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter III, sec. 1, p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter XV, sec. 9, p. 107.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, Letter XIII, sec. 3, p. 87.

in which the antimony is not merely solved, but *aufgehoben*. At any rate, it is clear that Schiller's notion of "aesthetic" is no mere recapturing of Greek harmony, but a higher stage of existence (as represented by Goethe), where that harmony is perfectly blended with the modern subjectivist tendencies of differentiation. Thus, if Kierkegaard (as seems likely) took over the categories from Schiller, he attacked the poet's intentions diametrically when, in defending the ethical, he wrote: "The aesthetical in a man is that by which he is immediately what he is; the ethical is that whereby he becomes what he becomes."<sup>71</sup> For Schiller, the aesthetic was the mode of becoming, plus the mediating guarantee of the result; it may, in this respect, be compared with the Hegelian *Idee-Begriff-Geist* complex, or with the "higher" *Sittlichkeit* that cements antique substantiality and modern *Moralität*. The *Spieltrieb*, mediate between content and form, multiplicity and unity, capacity and fulfillment, is the agent of this efficacy. Rising in nature and aiming after the moral vision, it strives, like Hegel's *Geist*, "towards annulling time within time, reconciling becoming with absolute being and change with identity."<sup>72</sup>

(10) This leads to a final brief comment about the dialectic and *Aufhebung*. The entire eighteenth letter of the *Ästhetische Erziehung* is a detailed discussion of how beauty dialectically mediates and unifies the opposed conditions of feeling and thinking, together with a suggestion of the Hegelian distinction between "false" and "true" infinities. Other unambiguous references to the process of *Aufhebung* occur.<sup>73</sup> While it would be much too simplistic to say that Schiller discovered the method and transmitted it to Hegel (as I said earlier, the "dialectical" attitude of negation, elevation, and supersession is pervasive in the

<sup>71</sup> S. Kierkegaard, "Equilibrium between the Aesthetical and the Ethical in the Conjugation of Personality," *Either/Or* (New York; 1959), II, 182.

<sup>72</sup> Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, Letter XIV, sec. 3, p. 97.

<sup>73</sup> See *ibid.*, Letter XV, sec. 9, and Letter XXIV, sec. 4.

German literature of the time), it is notable how closely the two understandings of dialectic converge, and how similarly they are applied.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, it is quite important to the grasp of Hegel's development to observe that the new idea occurs within a theory of aesthetics, or, more broadly, a philosophical theory of culture.

There is much more to say about Schiller; but, for our purposes, a sufficient groundwork has been laid for passing directly to Hegel.

Let me say from the start that the *Phenomenology*, Hegel's greatest work, is at once a vast and genial reduplication of Schiller's theme and a bitter, yet affirmative, surpassing of Schiller's aesthetic prescriptions for the healing of divided humanity. Thus the citation of Schiller at its very conclusion may not be mere happenstance: it may clothe a profound irony. Of course the *Phenomenology* has multiple associations. It is an artistic whole and not the reply to another artist (Schiller died in agony in the year previous to its composition). Yet to understand the *Phenomenology* better, it is useful to recall what Schiller was trying to do and what he transmitted to Hegel.

The first fruits of Schiller's impact on the young philosophical adept have fortunately been preserved for us in a truncated manuscript from 1796 called "Systemprogramm." This document not only sustains Kroner's contention that Hegel's thought was prefigured by Schiller *in nuce*,<sup>75</sup> but it gives a very exact notion of the means of transmittal.

Here, after a brief review of "nature," Hegel writes that he will discuss the works of man.<sup>76</sup> His first point is that the

<sup>74</sup> See *ibid.*, "Aufhebung" in Glossary, pp. 304-305.

<sup>75</sup> Kroner, *Von Kant bis Hegel*, II, 52.

<sup>76</sup> Hegel, *Dokumente*, p. 219. I accept the thesis that this writing is of genuine Hegelian provenance, as Hoffmeister maintained. See, on this, Henry S. Harris's review of Rüdiger Bubner, ed., *Das älteste Systemprogramm (Hegel-Studien, Beiheft 9, Bonn, 1973)*, in *Hegel-Studien*, X (1975), 299-305.



"idea" of man can provide no conception of the state, because the state is to be conceived of as something mechanical, while an "idea" must be an "object of freedom." Away with the state, then! "For every state must treat free men as mechanical gear-systems; and that it ought not to do." Discussions of morality and religion follow—clarified by the "idea"—suggesting that Hegel is already groping toward a first hierarchical ordering of the forms of spirit. These, however, are insufficient as a highest principle. Where shall it be found?

Finally the idea (*Idee*) that unifies everything, the idea of beauty, the word taken in its highest Platonic sense. I am now convinced that the highest act of reason (*Vernunft*), which binds together all ideas, is an aesthetic act, and that truth and goodness find intimate union only in beauty. The philosopher, just as much as the poet, requires the possession of aesthetic power. The men without aesthetic sensibility are our printing-press philosophers. The philosophy of spirit (*des Geistes*) is an aesthetic philosophy. One can't be spiritually rich in anything, not even historical reasoning—without aesthetic sensibility.<sup>77</sup>

Away with the state! Up with beauty! This would seem Hegel's temporary creed. What is more interesting, however, is his creation of a pinnacle of a system—obviously in reaction to Kant and in discipleship to Schiller—and his denomination of that system as a "Philosophie des Geistes."<sup>78</sup>

The value of *beauty* was not a transient enthusiasm for Hegel, for it retains a place in the triad of "absolute knowledge" in his completed system. But as his own philosophy

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Thus it would seem that R. Kroner (introduction to Knox, ed., *Hegel on Christianity*, pp. 15, 23–24) is in error when he places Hegel's specific refinement of the concept of *Geist* in a later period. However, Kaufmann (*Hegel*, p. 54) is perhaps also misled in seeing *Geist* so unproblematically as an Hegelian borrowing from Schiller; on this point, see *Aesthetic Education*, pp. 313–314.

developed, through trial and error, anguished reworking, and the assimilation of contemporary impacts, he came to see that beauty was an inadequate harmonizer for the moderns, that real unreflective and spontaneous beauty had collapsed in the decadence of Hellas, and that this had happened, precisely as Schiller had declared, under the impact of subjective criticism and the analytic intellect. Moreover, Schiller himself, in his influential treatise *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, had done much to expose the reasons why the true harmony of beauty was inaccessible to the modern artist.

Nevertheless, the Philhellenism of Hegel was unabated, and perhaps grew stronger, in the waning years of the eighteenth century, as we know from his scattered fragments and essays preserved for us under the editorship of Hermann Nohl and the research of Wilhelm Dilthey. This passion, as many commentators have emphasized, tended to grope with the problem of harmony and community through a series of complex and shifting contrasts between the Greek ideal and the spirit, fate, and cultural resources of Judaism and Christianity. It is no surprise that Hegel should engage in this form of inquiry from a religious perspective, given his earlier training and his absorption in Kant's conclusions about rational and positive Christianity.<sup>79</sup> But we cannot help perceiving three other things.

In the first place, Hegel tends to regard religion and all culture as inseparable, and to restrict the homogeneity of their effectiveness to the scope of a single people. This is what he conveys in the concept *Volksgeist*, a term which has obvious functional resemblances to Montesquieu's *esprit général*, but which is expressive not simply of a "system" of culture and laws, but of a far deeper aesthetic spirituality. An adequate religion is accessible to all, in a way that other forms of culture are not, in a way that politics is not, and it allows a people to ritualize and confirm its own sense of

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* (1793).

meaning and belongingness. As Hegel puts it later in his lectures on history: "Religion is the sphere in which a nation gives itself the definition of that which it regards as the true."<sup>80</sup>

But, in the second place, this still means that Hegel's concerns are political, in the sense that he is looking for a regulative essence of community life not merely in undifferentiated tribal societies, but in sophisticated ones as well. As yet he has not come upon the role of harmonizer that he would later confer on the state, partly because he saw Greek man's freedom as conditioned not by fixed political means but by his *Volksgeist*, his voluntary civility and obedience to a culture. However, in postclassical society, politics will have to emerge in a new way. The state will have to mediate what was once "immediate," much in the way that speculative thought will have to reorder, recover, and remember those harmonies that were once direct and felt. Finally, thought itself (hence Hegel's remarkable locution: "the state knows") will need to create the community that transforms government into felicity of self-government, where "all are free." Thus we read in the *Phenomenology* that Greek "government is concrete actual spirit reflected into itself, the self pure and simple of the entire ethical substance."<sup>81</sup> Philosophy must make this so in modern society. Hegel's continuing political preoccupation draws him further away from the creed of the *Ästhetische Erziehung*.

But there is the final philosophical or "systematic" problem to consider: the reconciliation of all life and thought. Hegel continued to retain Schiller's suggestion that what had to be unified were the concentrated singleness of ethical truth and the multiplicity of natural event. In a "system-

<sup>80</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, p. 50; cf. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 3 vols., tr. E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson (London, 1892-1896), I, 53.

<sup>81</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology*, tr. Baillie, p. 473; ed. Hoffmeister, pp. 323-324.



fragment" he declared austerely: "Life is the union of union and non-union."<sup>82</sup> He sought for this mediation in love;<sup>83</sup> he sought for it in religion and belief, following Jacobi; he even speculated on the emergence of a new religion fit for a "free people," in which "the infinite pain and the whole burden of antagonism" could be overcome.<sup>84</sup> As yet he did not satisfy his quest in speculative thought. Why? Because "philosophy . . . has to stop short of religion because it is a process of thinking and, as such a process, implies an opposition with nonthinking [processes] as well as the opposition between the thinking mind and the object of thought."<sup>85</sup> The final *Aufhebung* does not come, or is not definitively announced, until the *Glauben und Wissen* essay of 1802. In the meantime, Hegel has manifested a renewed interest in politics (including the lamentable plight of Germany), and he has once more confronted the problem of aesthetic mediation through his close association with Schelling. For obvious historical and actual reasons, the Germans are apt neither to be rehabilitated by sheer beauty nor to be reclaimed by a religion fit for "unhappy consciousnesses," true as it may be in its innermost parts. Truth and beauty are indeed out of phase in the practical sphere called life.

The transitions between an essentially Greek *Sittlichkeit* and the idea of the modern state, and between religion and speculative philosophy as instruments of reconciliation, are closely linked in Hegel. In each case, what is involved is a transfer from a basically aesthetic appreciation of the problem to a mental fusion of the actual and the rational. It is difficult to date these processes exactly, but it is clear that the Jena years 1801–1806 are critical.

Let us consider the more comprehensive case first. Up to approximately the turn of the century, as we know, Hegel's search for an absolute unifier of life and thought had tended

<sup>82</sup> *Hegel on Christianity*, p. 312.      <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

<sup>84</sup> Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben*, p. 141.

<sup>85</sup> *Hegel on Christianity*, p. 313.

to favor belief (Jacobi) as against speculation (Fichte). When Hegel and Schelling resumed their friendship and collaboration at Jena, Schelling had just renewed the notion of art as the highest form of spirit in his *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*. Schelling and Schiller were faculty colleagues, and had grown reasonably close to one another in philosophical appreciation.<sup>86</sup> This is the intellectual atmosphere which confronted the newly arrived Hegel. Schelling was searching for a "philosophy of identity," which was also Hegel's aim; and Schiller promoted the primacy of beauty, which was Hegel's Philhellenic weakness. However, Hegel was far from wishing to surrender his hard-won insights to any Romantic Nirvana: he was a wayward child of the eighteenth century, but not its despiser. Schelling's claims for aestheticism went far beyond what Schiller had recommended. Schiller had maintained a Kantian posture, an ambivalent duality of morality-through-art—moralized art and humanized morality—which Schelling summarily engulfed in his "philosophy of identity." Schelling wanted a final solution of knowledge; Schiller wanted a civilizing means of human integration. Schelling, Hegel gradually grew to observe, took the "real" human being and the processes of logic very lightly: concrete man was swallowed in the great  $A = A$ , and the "multiplicity of existence"<sup>87</sup> was frozen in an immobile whole. Schelling's mission was worthy, but his concepts and methods were intellectually prideful and dishonest. At least Fichte—despite his regrettable out-Kantianizing of Kant in the sense of moral and legal coercion—had some understanding of logic and its application to the movement of spirit. Of course Hegel did not leap to such a conclusion all at once. Schelling was his childhood friend and collaborator. But Schelling lacked the means to create a philosophy "able to relinquish the name of love of knowledge and be actual knowledge."<sup>88</sup> And

<sup>86</sup> D. Regin, *Freedom and Destiny*, p. 32.

<sup>87</sup> Preface to *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in Kaufmann, *Hegel*, p. 408.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 372.

Hegel increasingly sensed this as their friendship approached its crisis of 1807.<sup>89</sup>

Aside from problems of method, there was the fact that only Greek art was *true* art. There was no possibility that moderns could recapture it; they could only study it and redeem it appreciatively. As Hegel would later put it in his lectures:

Art is and remains for us, on the side of its highest possibilities, a thing of the past. Herein it has further lost its genuine truth and life, and is rather transported to our world of *ideas* than [it] is able to maintain its former necessity and its superior place in reality.<sup>90</sup>

Schiller was, in fact, a Romantic artist who could produce only this appreciation; he could not equal the art he was moved by and so much admired. Greek culture lives in our esteem, but it can no longer dominate our sensibility. The Greek gods are prisoners of their marble shapes; they "could only be localized in the mental conception and imagination."<sup>91</sup> Thus, what is to be salvaged from aesthetics is not a practice, but a philosophy of aesthetics—a systematic recall of the spirit's paradoxical voyage. And here Hegel is characteristically generous to Schelling, proclaiming him the deepest thinker in the philosophy of art.<sup>92</sup> But it is strictly understood in this encomium that Schelling has not discovered the medium of all thought, simply that part of it which must be reflected on and grasped by a higher means of speculation. In brief—and it is the regrettable destiny of

<sup>89</sup> For a full account, see X. Tilliette, "Hegel et Schelling à Iéna," *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, LXXIII (1968), 149–166. The progress of Hegel's philosophical revisions within the present context is interestingly traced in Jacques Taminiaux, *La nostalgie de la Grèce à l'aube de l'Idéalisme allemand* (The Hague, 1967), pp. 232–248.

<sup>90</sup> Hegel, *Fine Art*, I, 13.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 269; cf. II, 261: "The gods of classical art contain in themselves the germ of their overthrow."

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 86.



the spirit's history—the unity of life and thought is not to be found here, specifically because serene art lacks the profoundly disturbing activity of negation. Philosophy is an overcoming of aesthetics or the aesthetic life as well as the mediation through which they are preserved. This is also Hegel's final answer to Schiller's hope.

The turn toward politics is correlative to the turn toward philosophy. Put in the most simple fashion, this is because the aesthetic state of absolute *Sittlichkeit* is impossible. That impossibility makes necessary a politics and a state mediated by thought because mediated through the fragmented and decivizing experience of Christianity and modern subjectivity, where "men" ceased to be "citizens" and Church and State made contrary and divisive claims. The state is now in levels and layers, in corporations and functions; it is constitutional: it must be apprehended by an intellectualized politics.

To be sure, Hegel may have treated himself to the fantasy of "Greece returning." But he had lost all illusion that the French were the carriers of this gospel by reading Schiller's letters. Two turgid essays, the *Naturrecht* of 1801 and the *System der Sittlichkeit* (manuscript of 1802), make ambiguous overtures toward the restoration of harmonies of the polis in modern life. But, they, too, are *Gedankenstaaten*, clumsy and experimental attempts to set down the essence of a new solution.

The far more revealing and lucid exercise is the manuscript called *The German Constitution*, which was probably written some time between 1800 and 1802 (one would like to favor the later date). Here, Hegel has no illusions and is at his practical best, not restoring Greece, but attacking the archaic subterfuges of medievalism.

One particular passage describes the acuity of the German situation in terms very close to what Hegel will have to say elsewhere about modern subjectivity and "the good heart": "While [old] laws have lost their former life, the vitality of the present day has not known how to concen-

trate itself in laws. Every centre of life has gone its own way and established itself on its own; the whole has fallen apart."<sup>93</sup>

Similarly, there is the denial of any religio-cultural solution for Germany's misery. It is no longer just the fanciful observation that the gods have fled the sacred groves and emptied Valhalla; it is a message for all modernity:

Religion is that wherein men's innermost being is expressed, and, even if all other external and separated things may be insignificant, men yet recognize themselves in religion as a fixed centre; only thereby could they have been able to transcend the variety and mutability of their other relationships and so to win confidence in one another and become sure of one another. Here in religion at least an identity might have been thought necessary; but this identity too is something which modern states have found that they can do without.<sup>94</sup>

There remains politics; and Hegel does go to the length of asking for a "Theseus" to reunite Germany, a political artist in the absence of *Volksgeist*.<sup>95</sup> However, the "royal restorer" is scarcely a fundamental point of Hegelian theory.

What Hegel finally comes to theorize is a philosophical state marvelous both in its unity and intricacy, fully intellectualized, scarcely aesthetic. The fundamental outline of this state, as well as the explicit rejection of the forms of antiquity, is fully established in the lectures on the "philosophy of spirit" of 1805–1806.<sup>96</sup> From here on, the main business is refinement of the description.

There remains some contradiction in the notion of a state harmonized by speculative thought, where "all are free." Are all citizens speculative philosophers? Obviously not.

<sup>93</sup> Hegel, *Political Writings*, tr. T. M. Knox, with an introductory essay by Z. A. Pelczynski (Oxford, 1964), p. 146.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>96</sup> Hegel, *Jenenser Realphilosophie*, II, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Leipzig, 1931), pp. 250–251.

Here, it would seem, Hegel is compelled to fall back on (1) the particular humanizing and political form of education that he was later to develop in his rectoral addresses at Nuremberg; and (2) the efficacy of religious residues. Religion Hegel represents as "the mode in which the highest Idea is existent for the unphilosophical feeling, the perceiving and imagining consciousness."<sup>97</sup> I cannot take the space here to explain why Hegel asserted this kind of adequation (within the sphere of the "absolute Idea"); but I can deduce from his thought that men can be free in a state that is perceived and justified on either philosophical or religious grounds—religious, no doubt, in the case of the peasantry and the uneducated in general.

As for the educational side of the issue, one knows that Hegel had a wide sense of *Bildung*, which was not merely *Erziehung*, but systematic exposure to the highest and best in world culture, with the ends of civilization and public service in mind. This meant especially classical education, where we rediscover a self that "accords with the tone and universal essence of the mind."<sup>98</sup> "Education," Hegel declared in his lectures, "is the art of making men ethical."<sup>99</sup> And by this he meant not *moralisch*, but *sittlich*, fitted to play a part in the universal task: "By educated men, we may *prima facie* understand those who without the obtrusion of personal idiosyncrasy can do what others do."<sup>100</sup>

Hegel did not manage to reconstitute life and thought, if only because the means he suggested of recovering and reconciling the world's experience in thought were beyond the measure of man's capacity and patience. He did, however, make a profound effort to grasp and explain the German dilemma of "unhappy consciousness" and to universalize and overcome it in his philosophy. Of all his

<sup>97</sup> Hegel, *History of Philosophy*, I, 61.

<sup>98</sup> Hegel, *Nürnberger Schriften*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Leipzig, 1938), p. 303.

<sup>99</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, para. 151 (addition), p. 260.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 187 (addition), p. 268.



predecessors, Schiller had perhaps done the most to identify and trace out the living dimensions of that problem, rendering it available for Hegel's historical comprehension and suggesting a means of therapy. Hegel was attracted by the healing art that Schiller had prescribed, but he came to regard the recovery of any truly stabilizing aesthetic sensibility as a vain hope. He saw the contradiction inherent in the Classical longing of the Romantic artist.

Hegel felt that his advance beyond Schiller's vision was a Pyrrhic triumph. He was as drunk with Greece as Schiller. The fateful relinquishment of antiquity and *Schönheit* (and their intellectualized "preservation") in the *Phenomenology* was meant to, and does, have the power of tragedy. It is Hegel's own Golgotha, comparable to Milton's renunciation of pagan learning (the famous "fourth temptation") in *Paradise Regained*. And the supreme irony—and warrant of the fate of *Geist*—is that Hegel does this as no less of a Romantic artist than Schiller. He overleaps his time by expressing and redeeming it without the luxury of false consolation; but he does so as a "conquered pagan" who accepts and deepens the higher truth of the West without exactly abandoning his Attic nostalgia to its challenging disquietude.

## FOUR

---

### THE PROBLEM OF THE MODERN STATE

THE Hegelian therapy of politics cannot be “nature,” as Aristotle propounded. It must be mediated, complex, a “second nature.” Its setting cannot be the marketplace or the assemblies of direct democracy; rather it will take place within the articulated constitutional organs of the modern state. Here the recovery of politics has been fatally conditioned both by modern subjectivity and by applied institutional knowledge that will function in place of the dispositions of the *polis* and its free citizens.

The word “state” has different resonances according to time and place. The liberal tends to equate state with government, and see it either as the set of formal rules within which a government is obliged to operate or as a magistracy mandated to satisfy the plural forces of economic society and replicate their rhythms within the rule of law. Conservatives have characteristically regarded the state—following St. Augustine—as a providential punitive device imposed to create lawful order in view of man’s fallen nature. Marxism, influenced by and subsequently challenging the doctrine of liberal political economy, saw the state as an epiphenomenon of class domination or a provisional independency rising above class deadlock, due to “wither away” with the emergence of the classless society. As the basic text puts it:

It is always the direct relationship of the owners of the conditions of production to the direct producers—a relation always naturally corresponding to a definite stage in the development of the methods of labor and thereby its

social productivity—which reveals the innermost secret, the hidden basis of the entire social structure, and with it the political form of the relations of sovereignty and dependence, in short, the corresponding specific form of the state.<sup>1</sup>

Otherwise competing and hostile doctrines, both Marxism and liberalism claim to pierce behind the “mask” of the state to the “real forces” of society, and thus to “sociologize” a political science previously legalitarian (that is, encompassing the legitimacy of the rules and conduct of the political community).

Beyond the familiar “isms” cursorily cited here, one would wish to mention in passing a “realist” view of the state that defines it, according to Weber’s classical statement, as the agency possessing an effective monopoly of force within prescribed territorial limits, and to complement this notion with an “idealist” thesis which sees the state as the operative emblem of a nation’s legitimate will embodied in the regime best conforming to that ambiguous entity.

Confusions over the role and value of the state are not exhausted by the chameleon-like play of ideologies mediating between theory and actuality. At least two other kinds of interpretation enter the picture. One of these arises from the experience of national traditions and their historical treatments of the conceptual vocabulary of politics. The second is linguistic also, but it depends on principles that can be called structural—the notion that all concepts are relational, acquiring substantial meaning only vis-à-vis opposites and complements. Some illustrations will be useful.

As one knows, the Anglo-Saxon tradition has been squeamish with the word “state,” preferring in an earlier phase the concept “commonwealth” (*res publica*), often set structurally apart from “realm” (*regnum*), and, in later times, the more anodyne terms “political society,” or “politi-

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, 3 vols. (New York, 1967), III, 791.



cal system.”<sup>2</sup> At the end of Hegel's lifetime, if we follow the impassioned debates on the English Reform Bill of 1832, we find the word “constitution” invoked incessantly, but scarcely any reference to the state (in effect, the English had a state before the word came into currency).<sup>3</sup> Hobbes speaks of it (corresponding to *civitas*), but more often prefers the active term “sovereign”; Adam Smith likewise refers often to the “sovereign.”<sup>4</sup> Only in the writings of more continentally inclined specialists like Bernard Bosanquet, A. D. Lindsay, C. E. Vaughan, and Harold Laski has “state” achieved permanence in English political discourse. In America, the word has had an even more negative career, not only because of the federalist confusions it creates, but because the notion of “state” has seemed either menacing to “rugged individualism” or fatuous for the “realities” of politics (“who gets what, when, how”). Bentley called the word a “metaphysical spook,” and Dewey was very uncomfortable with it: “The moment we utter the words ‘the State’ a score of intellectual ghosts rise to obscure our vision.”<sup>5</sup> Marxists use the word “state” after their fashion, but the regnant minds of American political science feel more at home with “political system,” “political process,” and even that restored Renaissance term, “polity.”

The French, who, more than any other people, were the practical inventors of the modern state, adapted the term to their vocabulary, in both its political and juridical senses, without too much metaphysical meandering. Yet, as midwives of the revolutionary transformation of the state, they encountered fruitful confusions. From the Ancien Régime there had emerged, in separate layers of time, the distribu-

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Giovanni Sartori, “What is Politics?” in *Political Theory*, February 1973, pp. 20 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. W. N. Molesworth, *The History of the Reform Bill of 1832* (London and Manchester, 1865), *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 2 vols. (Homewood, Ill., 1963), II, Book V, 215 ff.

<sup>5</sup> John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (Chicago, 1927), p. 8.

tive notion of plural "states" (estates) of the realm (a juridical classification of privilege and function) and the aggregative notion of the state as the proprietary embodiment of the king's dominions (corresponding to Bossuet's "public power"). Mediated by the parallel idea of "nation," the events of the French Revolution handed the state from the prince to his subjects, or, rather, by depersonalizing the legal notion of "prince" or "sovereign," transferred possession and right from the apex to the base of the social pyramid by means of the fiction of a sovereign republic, "une et indivisible." "States," in the first sense, were dissolved in the resonant series of "il n'y a plus . . ." of the preamble to the Constitution of 1791; the state remained. Naturally, the full swing from monarchical absolutism to populist absolutism was halted both by the inbred resistances of society and by the ready implementation of a bourgeois "counterstate" based on talents and representation,<sup>6</sup> but the integrating power of the word survived. "State" became the substantive of which the form of government was the predicate, as Tocqueville so brilliantly perceived and exaggerated in his *Ancien Régime*. State was the continuing legality behind the displacements of power, the skeletal structure of which "France" is the flesh and blood and "the nation" the soul. Thus the French could use the term unblushingly to signify the endurance of their legal order beneath frequent and violent change, while at the same time comprehending and sharing the libertarian worries of the Anglo-Saxons by equating "state" with the evils of "le pouvoir" and the stifling of individual claims. Napoleon and de Gaulle, Proudhon and Alain suggest this delicate balance.

In Germany, where the word "state" seems to have been done to death, there is a different history still. It begins with the brilliant resurgence of German intellectualism in the eighteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Across a wide expanse of contigu-

<sup>6</sup> See Jean-Yves Guimar, *L'Idéologie nationale: nation, représentation, propriété* (Vienna, 1974), pp. 28–29.

<sup>7</sup> For the best account to date, see Peter Hanns Reill, *The German*

ous and linguistically connected peoples, the "Empire" was a virtual nullity, and "state" could scarcely be applied to more than a handful of the political units. Moreover, in Germany, there could be no linguistic confusion over "state" (*Staat*) and "estate" (*Stand*).<sup>8</sup> Lacking a true political foundation, the concept of state came to be applied to the rules of justice (*Rechtsstaat*) rather than to any explicit political organization.<sup>9</sup> Yet, at the same time, with the rationalization and expansion of Prussian power, the state also began to be perceived as a nexus of executive, bureaucratic, military, and legal functions. It must be remembered that in Germany the regime not only administered a territory and mustered armies, but regulated religious worship and public education through its own "mandarinate" of salaried functionaries. The state was what many Germans aspired to have, but possessed hardly at all because of the fossilization of their political arrangements. Thus, where a genuine state, such as Prussia, appeared, even under the aegis of an arrogant paternalism, it was applauded. As a certain Professor Brunn declared in a speech on the occasion of the birthday of Frederick William II (25 September 1789): "The Prussian state is the happiest of all states in Europe. . . ."<sup>10</sup> That monarch's illustrious predecessor had written: "There is only one good, that of the state as a whole."<sup>11</sup> The

---

*Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1975).

<sup>8</sup> It is significant that whereas in French we have the homonymous "state" and "estate" (*état*), in German there are the homonyms "estate" and "class" (*Stand*).

<sup>9</sup> For an account of the concept "state," see Hans Meier, "Einige historische Vorbemerkungen zu Hegels politischer Philosophie," in *Das älteste Systemprogramm: Studien zur Frühgeschichte des deutschen Idealismus*, ed. R. Bubner, *Hegel-Studien*, Beiheft 9 (Bonn, 1973).

<sup>10</sup> In *Berlines Jahrbuch für Aufklärung*, V (1789), 104 ff. Cited by Henri Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism in Eighteenth Century Prussia*, tr. F. Jellinek (Chicago, 1974), p. 20.

<sup>11</sup> Frederick the Great, "Essai sur les formes du gouvernement et



situation was paradoxical and poignant. "State" was a positive word—though not for Herder and the anarchically minded early Romantics—almost synonymous with a sense of political capacity, a capacity delivered by proxy into the hands of a mainly ascriptive, but partly competitive ruling class, yet posed against a myriad of depolitizing forces, within and without, which stimulated Germany's "unhappy consciousness." The Prussians, Brunschwig writes of this period, "confine themselves to fumbling and tend to reproach the social rather than the political system."<sup>12</sup> Madame de Staël, paraphrasing Kant's account of *Aufklärung*, senses the tradeoff: "The very lack of a political career, fatal though it is to the nation as a whole, gives the thinkers greater freedom. But there is a vast gap between the first-class and the second-class minds. . . . Anyone in Germany who does not concern himself with the universe at large has nothing at all to concern himself with."<sup>13</sup> *Rechtsstaat* itself is a mode of this *décalage*, this ideality; Hegel, especially, saw it as his mission to close the gap.<sup>14</sup>

The connotations of *Rechtsstaat* persisted through the Hegelian period, but they were forcefully altered and amplified by the political challenges of Revolution, Romanticism, and the Napoleonic experience. In the work of a single writer, Fichte, we observe the tensions between state-building (*Notstaat*) and the rational state (*Vernunftstaat*); in political science, "Rechtslehre" (1796) passes into "Staatslehre" (1813).<sup>15</sup> This means not only the substitution of political positivism for ideal jurisprudence, but the impending substitution of politics itself for mere thinking about politics, even if the Germans managed that transition

---

les devoirs du Souverain," in *Oeuvres*, 31 vols. (Berlin, 1846–1857), IX, 201.

<sup>12</sup> Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism*, p. 156.

<sup>13</sup> Germaine de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, Part I, ch. 18.

<sup>14</sup> See G. A. Kelly, *Idealism, Politics and History* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 81–82.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 226–232, 242–247.

very badly. This brief summary may help to suggest the exotic and peculiar early career of the word "state" in Germany. When William of Moerbeke invented the Latin word "politizare" to translate Aristotle for Christian Europe and bequeathed the concept to St. Thomas and Dante, he effected a change of utmost theoretical and practical importance. So, too, when the Revolutionary French hypostasized the dynastic state into the popular state by way of mediating bourgeois representation. The German contribution was neither so lucid nor so bold as these. Many still castigate it as an infamous witches' brew. Yet German political theory leaves us with critical problems which, though their context has changed greatly, concern the status of political science in our own times.

The structural analysis interacts necessarily with the ideological and national ones. To borrow a familiar terminology, "synchronic" and "diachronic" approaches are intermingled in the real world; their separation betrays a certain deficiency, and one could wish for some "panchronic" model in which the two could be effectively joined.<sup>16</sup> The problem here is certainly not to work out such a scheme, but simply to bring the resources of structuralism to understanding the concept of the state.

In his pioneer lectures on linguistics, Saussure refers to what he calls a "language state" (*état de langue*), which is the field of "synchronic linguistics" and may, he points out, be compared to an *epoch* in political history, a space of time treated more or less as a slice of time because the salient composing elements remain relatively constant in relation to one another.<sup>17</sup> The comparison is suggestive, but it is not our purpose to pursue it here. "In a language state," Saussure concludes, "everything is concerned with relations."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Maurice Leroy, *Main Trends in Modern Linguistics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967), pp. 70-71, 89-91.

<sup>17</sup> Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale* (Paris, 1968), p. 142.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170..

One of these relations he calls "syntagmatic," in which "a term acquires its value only because it is opposed to that which precedes or follows it, or both at once."<sup>19</sup> Without needing to have other key elements literally present in a sequence of discourse about the state, we can still contextually understand how the value of that term is modified by other terms standing in juxtaposition to it. This is a tricky business, for, as Saussure remarks, "there is no exact boundary between the fact of language (*langue*), mark of collective usage, and the fact of speech (*parole*), which depends on individual free choice."<sup>20</sup> The vulnerability of a concept like "state" to *parole* means, *inter alia*, that in syntagmatic relations it is subject to all the gathered resources of history and ideology that contributed to its making, as well as to structural conventions obtaining within its "language state." The realms of discourse and vocabulary in politics, and to a lesser extent law, are, to a very great degree, affective, as Hobbes so well knew.<sup>21</sup> Such concepts shift, are receptive of ideologies, and rarely keep any consensual stipulation. However, we can make some progress in analyzing them if we account for their syntagmatic relationship with bordering terms, most of which are equally "value-laden." By so doing, we locate "structures of political discourse" and avoid isolated misreadings. A milieu of meaning helps us to find the term.

For the sake of simplicity, let me suggest some binary contrasts that (regardless of ideological predisposition) give us a somewhat different value-tone for the notion of state. If we contrast "state" with "statelessness" or "anarchy," we are apt—unless we are anarchists—to sense some relief that we dwell beneath a law-making power. On the other hand, if we employ the dichotomy of "state" and "individual," we may have a quite different reaction: we may sense

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *De homine*, X, 3, in *Man and Citizen*, ed. Bernard Gert (New York, 1972), pp. 40–41; *Leviathan*, ed. Michael Oakeshott (New York, 1962), Book I, ch. 4, pp. 39–40.



powerlessness or anger at official restraints on our liberty. "State" versus "church" initiates a whole other series of responses, as does "state" versus "society," "state" versus "fatherland," "state" versus "other states," and so on. In Hegel's case, "state" and "knowledge" form a very powerful and complementary syntagmatic link. Where the term "state" is exposed, it is important to establish the conditions of its interplay.

That interplay, as we know, is burdened with complexities that cannot be developed here. For each "syntagmatic" or relational use of the concept "state," there are many accidental or historical associations attached not only to it but to other terms of the structure in which it assumes instant meaning. This complexity should not, of course, freeze us into surrender. We know quite well what a state is not; we know which thinkers and actors might be described as "statists" or "antistatists," and so forth. From the study of ideologies, we know why the state is an object of suspicion or anathema to some schools of thought. And from the political history of nations we see how and to what extent collective cultural attitudes toward the state have been formed. But we should avoid allegorizing the state when it is, in fact, a shifting set of relationships. He who disapproves of the state when it seems to infringe on his legitimate private activity may rally to its banner when it protects him in time of war or catastrophe. He who objects to the state's reluctance to certify the temporary claims of certain "vital forces of society" may approve of its readiness to oppose a hostile religious uniformity. To be sure, there was once no state—in the modern meaning of the word—and it is imaginable that there will come a time when the political community is changed into an ostensibly different form. But for the meantime, willy-nilly, the state remains established both as a historical entity and as a concept having complex relations with other components of a political syntagma.

I have not yet ventured any definition of the state of my own. Indeed, I have raised some rather insuperable obsta-

cles to that definition, by introducing ideological, historical, and relational caveats. Still, a clarification is necessary. According to my view, the state is a political term, and politics is to be viewed autonomously. This means that we are not likely to achieve heaven on this earth, and that some semblance of laws and coercive power will persist as long as there is a society of men. It means also, given the structure of what I do not fear to call human nature, that even if—as seems to me chimerical—economic scarcity could be conquered once and for all on a global scale, other facets of domination, preference, and levels of skill would persist, requiring a political system. As Raymond Aron puts it: “The problem of power is eternal, whether the earth is worked with a pick or a bulldozer.”<sup>22</sup> It would be necessary, therefore, to eliminate man if one wished to do away with politics. Until some qualitatively different form of political organization comes into being, we may anticipate the continuity of the state.

The state emerged historically when the vital aspects of human control and welfare were taken from the spiritual power. Ideologically, this meant that the dual system of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* came to an end; for purposes of this world one of the heads of the double eagle had to be lopped off. The church ceased to be an *imperium* in its own right and became, gradually and grudgingly, a pressure group within the field of secular politics. At the same time—though not at the same rate—the aspirations of the world beyond were remitted into our own. The state, in its worst moments, harbored a kind of religious frenzy, but typically, it was content, in a world of other states, to survive in a space and time that were more protective than eschatological. Tempting as it is, after the exploits of modern nationalism and the total wars of the twentieth century, to see the state fulfilling the pretensions of a universal church, its role as “mortal God” has generally been more modest. If, as in

<sup>22</sup> Raymond Aron, “Thucydide et le récit historique,” in *Dimensions de la conscience historique* (Paris, 1961), p. 189.

Hegel's daring locution, the state marches through the world with God's steps, it is no single eternal state that makes this journey. But the church has ceased to perform the errand of world history and has been reduced to a contributing force. As has often been remarked recently, Hegel failed to conjure with the spiritual dynamism of "nationalism"; he opted for a soberer view of human organization. Still he saw with great clarity the relevance of politics to the development of man's total culture. He also saw, and feared, that subjective forces, "full of passionate intensity," might clash for the possession and guidance of the political community.

What, then, is the state? Provisionally we may say that the state is a network of exchanged benefits and beliefs, a reciprocity between rulers and citizens based on laws and procedures amenable to the maintenance of community. These procedures are expressive of the widest range of mutual initiative and compliance that the members can regularly practice, and they depend on a consensus that asserts individual freedoms while accepting such constraints as are necessary to the cohesion and self-respect of the whole. Conventional in its origins as a product of human convenience and reason, the state is "natural" by its mission of creating a climate for human fulfillment. The state is the sharing of a certain disciplined life without which innumerable benefits, and even freedoms (*contra* Bentham), would not ensue. It is an amalgamation of human interests and demands: as such it mediates the will of the individual with the claims of primary groups such as the family or profession, with the intense participation of spiritual communities such as churches, philanthropies, guilds, or even "nations," and finally with a discordant catalogue of universal values described as "humanity." Self-defense, self-determination, welfare, public virtue, and the advancement of culture comprise some of its major values, to the degree that these reflect a common interest. The organization of the state's powers is directed toward these ends. Obviously,



“welfare,” “virtue,” and “culture” will often collide in collective life. The state must buffer and temporarily settle these collisions.

The state is not part of a dialectic with society (non-official community) that results in its own abolition; neither can it easily support the claims of personalized power against institutionalized power; neither is it logically the plaything of totalitarian, chiliastic, or extra-legal forces that thwart its intercessory objectives: Hitler’s “state” was a paltry and incoherent thing despite the damage it wreaked. The state has the difficult—never-to-be-achieved—role of being the arena of both integrity and compromise. It cannot merely be civil society refined or writ large, because then its *pars pro toto* becomes a mask for injustice. Neither can it be utopia or the “end of man,” because it is instrumental to higher human utilities and must perpetually balance opposed values of organization and spontaneity, routine and originality, legitimacy and efficiency.

I concur in Georges Burdeau’s contention that “the state is . . . the form by which the group finds its unity in submission to law.”<sup>23</sup> Burdeau’s immense work on the historical and legal criteria of the state is a major contribution to theoretical literature, and a timely corrective to modern libertarian or societarian writing that would vaporize the state out of existence. I cannot summarize the achievement in a few words; however, an extended passage from Burdeau will convey the thrust of his analysis:

When man first understands that only a power which is transcendent and free from all connection with the subjective preferences (*volontés*) of an individual aspiring to be chief in virtue of his personal strength can embody the discipline necessary to the life of the community; when he conceives a discipline suited to the goals pursued by the group and forming a community of the pres-

<sup>23</sup> Georges Burdeau, *Traité de science politique*, II: *L’Etat* (Paris, 1949), p. 145.

ent generation with those past and those to come; finally, when the political organization of the group ceases to be considered by its members as a transient juncture of unstable forces and divergent interests, and is instead taken as a lasting order in the service of universal values that link the chief with his subjects, then the idea of the state emerges and, with it, the reality of the state which can exist nowhere but in its own idea.<sup>24</sup>

It might be argued that Burdeau's description conveys the idea of a state which time, revolution, and technology have already left shipwrecked on the beach. Yet if the concept of the state is anything more than a fiction, the argument will apply quite widely to old and new states alike, with only some addenda necessary to insure preferred institutional relationships. It might be argued also that Burdeau's description is inadequately "realistic." To be sure, he does not claim the monopoly and use of force as a sufficient condition. But he allows, as I think is plausible, for the mediation of law and institutionalized consent between the polarities of freedom and force. In fact Burdeau, who is both a socialist and a democrat, believes that no revolution is complete or comprehensible without a revolution in law. One could equally object that Burdeau fails to recognize the reality (Marxist) that the state is chiefly an organ of class domination charged with the task of coercion; or (liberal) that the state is intended to stabilize competing social forces ("divergent interests") and submit them to procedural rules adequate for securing peace in the community. But in neither of these cases would it really be worth writing a book about the state unless it were to refute the concept, *à la* Lenin or *à la* T. D. Weldon. That the world is full of bad states proves neither their impossibility nor their ephemerality. It is even conceivable that Burdeau's attempt to rationalize the state—like Hegel's—has a greater practical payoff than the numerous writings that conclude that it

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

isn't really there at all or that it is a misbegotten creature which society will one day commit to euthanasia.

Burdeau, with great scrupulosity, uses the concept "group," avoiding the notion of class driven to death by Procrustean Marxists, but equally skirting the "group" implications of American political science. The *telos* of the group is the state, an agency and environment where justice is dispensed. If there is justice, from what other source would we expect it to proceed? From a natural law fit only for the wise, as Rousseau puts it?<sup>25</sup> From some hypothetical standoff of interest-group pressures, based on a metaphor from Newtonian physics? From the dominance of an elite that shrouds its partisan behavior behind a lulling "political formula?"<sup>26</sup> From God's visitation of righteousness on man? From the caprices of the individual—be he sane or crazy, dangerous or docile—so long as no public constraint reaches out to muffle him? If we are affluent, ascetic, or rigorous enough, we can wish the state away. If we are brave or foolhardy enough, we can shoot at it or defy it. We can escape from it—into freedom? But for the mass of men, it is one of the concrete realities of life. This means, at the maximum, that they should have equal access to it. At the vital minimum it means that it should be so oriented as to grant them justice. For the church can only give them solace, the society can only give them vengeance, and voluntary groups can only give them appeasement. To use Burdeau's language, the state remains the group of groups. Wishing it away or employing a dubious political science to vaporize it simply dodges the issue of how multiple intersecting lives can be organized in a complex political community. It is more realistic to acknowledge and humanize the state than to deny its existence.

For historical and ideological reasons the state has lately

<sup>25</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile ou de l'éducation*, ed. Richard (Paris, 1961), Book V, p. 605.

<sup>26</sup> Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, tr. Hannah D. Kahn (New York, 1939), pp. 70–72.



seemed quite indefensible in America. Anarchists and Marxists, while pursuing their own quarrels, have attacked a state which they equated with privilege, exploitation, and societal corruption. Neo-Freudianism has contributed savorous criticisms which suggest that all politics is a transmogrified politics of the family and a quest for personal gratification or identity. Liberals have demoralized the political community from the palmy days of "spend and spend, elect and elect" to their more sophisticated exercises in the healing art of "cost-benefit corruption." The scandals of Watergate and of the intelligence and police agencies have scarred political faith, after Vietnam had taken its bitter toll of rage and bewilderment. Some of the pathways to this cacophony and despair had already been smoothed by "value-free" political science and sociology.

There is a burning issue of faith in the state which, in intellectual hands, becomes a utopian rehash of all the shopworn "withering away" theories of the nineteenth century. Persons of all political stripes howl for restrictions on the state, knowing little about its theory, origins, and functions. But it is not clear that the fragile state built by Americans over centuries, with due regard for limits and control, is directly at fault. As in all "advanced" societies, the American state now exists in depth, power, and complexity. Even avowed "conservatives" have found it impossible to roll back the state. Of course one can have no objection to trimming its cheating, reduplication, and waste. But the fact remains that the state, because it is the "group of groups," is the deprived person's best advocate and defender, even if the American state too often gave a free ride to mobile individuals whose dedication to the common cause was at best rhetorical. The problem, as I would put it, is not to diminish or castigate the state with abuse that instead should be visited on *corrupt persons coming from civil society* with no care or standards of public service, but to revive it as an independent resource of the entire people. Reform,

guided by theory, should be used to implement and sustain the state's neutrality.

This is why I find it understandable but distressing to read works by our most esteemed intellectuals which either duck the issue of the state or see the state as a cornucopia of political and moral injustice. In what many regard as the most significant book of political philosophy written in this country and in our times, John Rawls searches elaborately for the rules of justice, how human beings create it and understand it. Unlike his master Immanuel Kant, Rawls, for all his wisdom and virtuosity, fights shy of establishing any connection of justice with the incumbent reality of state structures. He includes remarkably little discussion of political authority. It is important to understand what social justice is and on what principles it might be founded; but it is no less important for persons living in ongoing social situations to be able to test the texture of the institutions at their disposal. And this is where Rawls appears to draw back. "Society," he writes, "is a more or less self-sufficient association of persons who in their relations to one another recognize certain rules of conduct as binding and who for the most part act in accordance with them"<sup>27</sup> Rawls makes justice the *ne plus ultra* of human civility and decency, and designates "society" as its natural source and arbiter. "Political" as opposed to "social" justice is the transplantation of society's rules of conduct to the formalism of a "just constitution" and the political participation necessary to secure the preferential ordering of the rules of justice.<sup>28</sup> But even a conception of justice, Rawls concedes, is less than a social ideal;<sup>29</sup> we search in vain, however, for the vessel in which his "social ideal" would be embodied. In such a vision the state seems totally insubstantial, and society's business is evidently conducted by lawyers and moral mathematicians.

While the harmonizing attributes of the Rawlsian state

<sup>27</sup> John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

are aleatory, those of his colleague Robert Nozick are yoked beneath the most absolute law of liberal freedom. Starting from a quasi-Lockean picture of individuals as rights-bearing monads, Nozick proceeds to argue that "the minimal state is the most effective state that can be justified. Any state more extensive [than one affording the security of persons and the enforcement of contracts] violates people's rights."<sup>30</sup> It may be questioned, however—here far more severely than in the case of Rawls (who piques a curiosity about social morality in his subjects rather than assuming *a priori* that they embody it)—that the imaginative reconstruction of an apparatus intended to secure private rights is a sufficient condition for exploiting the human possibilities of a community of reason and culture. As Hegel comments crisply: "It is false to maintain that the foundation of the state is something at the option of all its members. It is nearer the truth to say that it is absolutely necessary for every individual to be a citizen."<sup>31</sup> Nozick allows himself to speak of citizens and even, in one instance, of "a reasonably alert citizenry," but what his citizens are enjoined to be alert about is the quality of their private and noncivic stature, not their public personality.<sup>32</sup>

A different, in some ways more traditional, liberal dissent against the state is reflected in the writings of F. A. Hayek, who, following his masters of the Scottish Enlightenment (moral philosophers who literally, after 1707, had no state), premises a rule-governed "Great Society" creating its abstract justice out of spontaneous but coordinated human actions, as opposed to the impact of "government," which is merely the most general species of purpose-oriented "organizations." Hayek combines the mistrust of political "rationalism" celebrated by Oakeshott with the "nomocratic"

<sup>30</sup> Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York, 1974), p. 149.

<sup>31</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), Z to para. 157, p. 242.

<sup>32</sup> Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, p. 272.



as opposed to "telocratic" preference expressed by Jouvenel in his classic work *On Power*, to argue that purpose-oriented organizations (sovereignly directed) normally distort the fund of knowledge and experience progressively developing from the natural moral and economic order. Hayek's "government" is not even a proper *Rechtsstaat*; it most of all resembles the night-watchman authority proposed by Hume in his *Treatise of Human Nature*. As for "state," Hayek simply cannot abide the word.<sup>33</sup>

Another cry of anathema has recently come from the "communitarian" part of the forest. Robert Nisbet, who shares few of the political impulses of Rawls, Nozick, and Hayek, writes approvingly of "the appeal of the nonpolitical, the genuinely social, the voluntary and the co-operative at the grass roots." It is of course undeniable that our bungled leviathans have done much to stunt social inventiveness and gaudy variety. However, their existence under improved conditions of stewardship, morale, and public virtue would today seem a precondition for the fecundity of autonomous groups. Political distress would seem to demand political cure rather than protective withdrawal to the potting shed or the "original position." In any case, it seems excessive to declare that "liberation of the social from the political may yet prove to be the greatest contribution to stability and freedom alike in this century."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> For the most extensive statement of Hayek's political theory (a consistent and redoubtable one, though not nearly so complex as that of Rawls), see F. A. Hayek, *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, I: *Rules and Order* (London, 1973), esp. pp. 1-54. His derogation of the state (a term useful only in international politics) appears on p. 48. See also Michael Oakeshott's recent *On Human Conduct* (Oxford, 1975), where, though differently derived, the adversary concepts *societas* and *universitas* appear to parallel the "rule-governed" and "purpose-governed" organizations of de Jouvenel and Hayek.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Nisbet, excerpt from *Twilight of Authority*, *New York Times* op-ed page, 23 September 1975. I fail to find this exact language in Nisbet's previously cited work (New York, 1975); but cf. pp. 269-275. Nisbet anathematizes the modern centralizing state, but

The voices urging a new liberation from the entrapments of politics, or constructing new theories of the city of man on the basis of abstract human consent or entitlement fly in the face of the material evidence of our culture. In the late twentieth century we may not feel lyrical about public life and public virtue in the manner of a St. Thomas glossing Aristotle, a Leonardo Bruni praising Florence, or an American founding father anticipating the *novus ordo seclorum*, but we are compelled to give these things our attention. The focus of this problem is the state, what it is, what we conceive it to be, what we might make of it.

Our reluctance to confront the problem of the state is naturally related to our observation of its floundering, its evils, its swollen size, its torpor, as well as the suspicion, in the words of Jouvenel, that "power, which had been refashioned for the service of society, is in reality its master. . . . The appeal to the state against the exploiters of human labor ended in the substitution of it for them."<sup>35</sup> But we are also conditioned by the regnant political theories—liberalism, Marxism, neo-Machiavellianism, and their hybrids—into believing that the state can never, even approximately, be for *all*, that it must axiomatically be according to the desires of *someone*, as Thrasymachus argued. Perhaps this condition can be mitigated by relative prosperity, ideological obfuscation, or temporary arrangements of countervailing power; but these occurrences are either transitory or deceptive. Whatever the state is in our mental image, it is not the instrument by which what is best in the community is raised to the surface, it is not the locus of the "common good," it is not a place of neutral appeal for the various parts of society. It exists to protect us from our ex-

---

it is not the Hegelian state that he is castigating. Indeed, he does not know quite what to make of Hegel. On pp. 215–216 he launches a severe attack against Rawls, behind whose rules of justice and their performance he detects a dense bureaucratic apparatus.

<sup>35</sup> Bertrand de Jouvenel, *Power: The Natural History of its Growth* (London, 1952); p. 288.

ternal enemies and from ourselves and to see that the simulacrum of law is enacted and enforced, while feathering some nests and pillaging others.

Over centuries, political philosophy expended vast intellectual resources in quest of the rationale by which men could live well in a community and how they could suffer a superior, in some ways sovereign, power that would enhance these arrangements. The seriousness of that quest was not doubted until modern ideologies arose in deadly quarrel, not only to fight and kill on the battlefield, but to sow rancor and suspicion across the entire range of human values. The "science of society" then arose to suggest that the "science of the state" was a delusive or second-order enterprise. No student of politics will be arrogant enough to claim that some movement of ideas, independent of concrete historical events, displaced the notion that the state might be made just in favor of the notion of "who gets what, when, how." But confusions of doctrine have fed and fed from the devastations of actuality.

Let us put it very simply. If we have innumerable bad states and if it seems unlikely (however much one may reinvent the social contract or the invisible hand) that the era of the "positive state" is on the wane, then we must be concerned with humanizing the state and making it impartial under prevailing conditions. As I shall attempt to show in the next essay, Hegel's theory of a "neutral state" was a step in this direction; the problems that he raised remain our legacy despite the allure of competing "sciences of society." Is a "neutral state" theoretically possible or imaginable? If not, then one supposes that we shall simply devise and oppose countervailing forces in the empirical pursuit of a social equilibrium, or we shall seek new scenarios in which the state might "wither away" in a process of human redemption, or else we shall concede that political philosophy itself is a vain enterprise.



## FIVE

---

### HEGEL AND THE "NEUTRAL STATE"

THE "aesthetic state" of Schiller was assuredly "neutral"—a companionable fraternity of sensitive and like-minded souls. But it lacked plausible expansion to society and plausible political commitment; in effect, it was a withdrawal. Yet the aesthetic impulse as a coordinator of society is not entirely far-fetched: in the deepest sense, Kant's idea of community, as expressed in the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*, had been an inexplicable mutuality of artistic awareness presumably universal in scope. On the other hand, this contradicts what Hegel had ascertained about the regress of the natural appreciation of beauty in modern civilization and the liberal stimulus for validating a variety of subjective experiences and tastes. When we live in common, it is not amid statues or in a picture gallery, but amid legal and moral disputes and constraints. The uppermost question is to rationalize their order in a new kind of state politics.

In our own time the problem of the state seems to be one of keeping Leviathan from becoming Frankenstein's monster, while acknowledging, amid the helplessness that complexity begets, the need for something more than a switch-box that routinely couples society's demands and compliances in a system of needs aping a system of justice. But this was not precisely the problem that Hegel inherited. No correct departure in analyzing either Hegel's political philosophy or the total development of the theory of the state can be made without a recognition of the problem and its surroundings.

Hegel laid bare more adequately than any other thinker

of his age the anomalies of taking political economy to be creator of political life in common. He perceived a "civil society" based on increased specialization, accelerating commodity exchange, the accumulation of capital, the appearance of an industrial labor force, a mature development of the movement "from status to contract," and the resplendent emergence of *homo economicus*. Conceding the power of these events, and linking them intellectually with the Western growth of self-consciousness, he nevertheless foresaw the inadequacy of "civil society" as either a self-equilibrating system of justice (what F. A. Hayek has called in our day a "catallaxy")<sup>1</sup> or a locus of the common political will. Unlike the Romantics, he did not dwell on the pathology of this "battlefield where everyone's individual private interest meets everyone else's";<sup>2</sup> indeed, he saw within "civil society" the ripening and training of resources for a higher purpose. Nor did he denigrate the work of the political economists, for theirs was "a science which is a credit to thought because it finds laws for a mass of accidents."<sup>3</sup> It was he who, in a still fruitful dichotomy manipulated by scores of successors, deployed the concepts of "civil society" and "state" against each other, while at the same time (and this point is often brushed by) presenting a theory of their mutual support or reciprocity. Moreover, from 1805 onward, Hegel not only called attention to the dialectical properties of labor, tools, production, and exchange, but also forecast some of the propulsion of industrial society. This facet of Hegel's clairvoyance has become a leading motto, if not the centerpiece, of much contemporary interest.

No doubt, despite methodological disclaimers, Hegel saw

<sup>1</sup> F. A. Hayek, "The Principles of a Liberal Social Order," in *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics* (Chicago, 1967), p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), para. 289A, p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Z to para. 189, p. 268.

beyond his time with a certain prescience and with certain errors. It is plausible to compliment him as one of the founders of the "science of society." But we should exercise care in reading back on Hegel interpretations that are disloyal to the nature of his inquiry. If Hegel saw the state as the linchpin of historical social arrangements, this is more important than any contribution of his to the doctrine of society. Hegel had an exquisite sense of historical momentum and supersession; he was not a Restoration reactionary. Yet *his* sense of the future was not *our* impression of a future created partly under his influence. When he spoke of "the spirit making leaps" in the Preface to the *Phenomenology*,<sup>4</sup> he was not, to the extent that this remark can be glossed politically, replacing political philosophy with political sociology. Rather, he was reaching toward a new, rather sober "organization of freedom" within the post-Revolutionary state that resolved and mastered old discordancies. The evolution of industrial society, with its surrounding ideologies, has obscured the fact that Hegel's political theory was a child of its time, directed toward the issues around him, not the debates of coming decades. Despite his keen insights into contradictions between the social world, where "the Understanding (*Verstand*) with its subjective aims and moral fancies vents its discontent and moral frustration,"<sup>5</sup> and the state, "which works and acts by reference to consciously adopted ends, known principles, and laws which are not merely implicit but are actually present to consciousness,"<sup>6</sup> it is not in the syntagmatic opposition between these two elements that we should seek the pattern of Hegel's own doctrine. The Hegelian state has a different historical and structural import than our reading back is apt to give it.

We should first put out of our minds the notion that He-

<sup>4</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, tr. J. Baillie (London, 1964), p. 75.

<sup>5</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 189A, p. 127.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 270, p. 165.



gel's "civil society" has much to do with our own—except in its power to stimulate certain brands of intellectual alienation. Hegel did not foresee the highly developed conditions of capitalism and their industrial results. What he did see in 1820 were conditions proceeding from centuries of culture which, beginning in Socratic Athens, had nourished a spirit of subjectivity, allowing for enormous mutations of mind and society. Both as a matter of right and a fact of philosophical history he legitimized the embodiment of these tendencies in the political fabric.

The most striking element, perhaps, of Hegel's political theory, which makes it quite foreign to simplistic forms of organicism, is that he takes the subjective will to be a cornerstone of modern government.<sup>7</sup> Of course he does not stop there: he imposes a higher "Hellenic" or *sittlich* goal of public virtue and public service upon the modern conditions. Yet the origins of this standpoint are not in "nature," but rather in the will, which, being free, produces a system of right as "a realm of freedom made actual, the world of mind brought forth out of itself like a second nature."<sup>8</sup> The philosophical problem is to exalt will to a nature, raising it from caprice to historical participation in the rational, that is, in the state, after a "serial exposition of the relationships which are necessitated by the idea of freedom."<sup>9</sup> Reason is to be made natural by way of historical *Bildung*, and nature is to be endowed with *Geist*, which is human in appearance, divine in logic. In historical terms, the synthesis of will and reason in actualized institutions has far less to do with the anticipation of industrial dilemmas than with the need to mediate revolutionary subjectivism with a legal recovery of the common life and the practice

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the treatment of Hegel's philosophy in the natural rights tradition by K.-H. Ilting in "The Structure of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right,'" in Z. A. Pelczynski, ed., *Hegel's Political Philosophy: Problems and Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 89–106.

<sup>8</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, Introduction, para. 4, p. 20.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 148A, p. 107.

of public virtue. "Virtue," Hegel writes, supporting this claim, "is the ethical order reflected in the individual character so far as that character is determined by its natural endowment."<sup>10</sup>

Caprice, "private conscience," "subjective knowing" give no more assurance of political rectitude than an appeal to subjective opinion could suffice to ground a science.<sup>11</sup> But insofar as the arbitrary or anarchic tendencies of modern "civil society" thwart the common good, they are not apprehended as novel phenomena attached to the inventions of a single generation, but as a new leap of that subjectivity that had traced its way through abstract legal right, Christianity, and the culture of the Enlightenment up to Kantianism, literary Romanticism, and the French Revolution. "Civil society" is the most highly developed and objectified form of this process. And it is not by accident, but by historical logic, that it both opposes and calls forth the most highly articulated form of the state. For state and society *do* have much in common. Both are secular, firmly rooted in this world, even though both participate in the world's providential arrangements. But the utilitarian ethics of civil society epitomize a secular world vision whose beginnings can be found in the breakdown of the *polis*. Correspondingly, therefore, the state is also a historical antagonist. Its secular majesty is made frankly equivalent by Hegel to the ontological proof of God's existence; the state is a *kosmos* and the disturbance of its mature constitution is a kind of *akosmia*: "Akin, then, to this reasoning is the idea of treating the monarch's right as grounded in the authority of God, since it is in its divinity that its unconditional character is contained."<sup>12</sup> The state disciplines and corrects the centrifugal features of society; but it also draws its personnel and public understanding from that reservoir. Though the principle of the latter is dispersion (or "pluralism") and

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 150, p. 107.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 137A, p. 91.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 279A, p. 182.

that of the former is unity, both rehearse a secularizing dialectic that took centuries to fly from its religious cocoon.

A proper understanding of the issues involved in Hegel's political philosophy will then proceed from analyzing the tensions between religious and secular authority in view of the restitution of an "objective" social ethos. This argument is not easily laid out, because religion is so ambivalent in Hegel, both as a source of the metaphors of living culture and as an inheritance. Contrary to some modern interpretations (which are "Young Hegelian" at base), Hegel was neither a pussyfooting atheist nor an anthropological humanist. He was deeply convinced—at least in his maturity—of the speculative content of Christianity and of the philosophical value of all religion. Though Habermas may be correct in attributing a "Stoical placidity and composure" to Hegel's witness of the decline of faith,<sup>13</sup> the fact remains that Hegel conceived the solidarity of his political society in the presence of Christianity (answering Bayle),<sup>14</sup> wrote of it (in its Lutheran Protestant form) as the foundation for thinking the modern state,<sup>15</sup> and cast his philosophy within the metaphor of the Christian dogmas. Thus, when we see him as a relentless secularizer, we must understand that Hegel's *Aufhebung* of Christianity exalted it while subordinating it, and that he raised religious conviction and Christian symbolism above the rationalistic deism of the Enlightenment.

This distinction can be reinforced by a contrast. In the seventeenth century, Spinoza had written daringly in defense of toleration and an autonomous politics: "It remains for me to show that between faith and theology, and philosophy, there is no connection, nor affinity. . . . Philosophy

<sup>13</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, tr. J. Viertel (Boston, 1974), p. 190.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. my remarks in *Idealism, Politics and History* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 350–352.

<sup>15</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, tr. J. Sibree (New York, 1956), pp. 437–438.



has no end in view except truth: faith, as we have abundantly proved, looks for nothing but obedience and piety. Again, philosophy is based on axioms which must be sought from nature alone: faith is based on history and language, and must be sought for only in Scripture and revelation."<sup>16</sup> Faith, according to Spinoza, begets "the greatest latitude in philosophical speculation," and therefore a toleration of thought within a political structure whose own rules are confirmed by natural necessity. Hegel, who has certain very subtle attachments to Spinoza,<sup>17</sup> nevertheless took speculative reason to be a conquest of the truth of revelation and faith, a higher analogue of Christianity with pedagogical and political implications. For Hegel, philosophy was the "unity of art and religion," the mediation of their freedom and necessity. It shared the content of religion, but surpassed its "forms of representation and reflective understanding." However, religion was "the truth for all men, [whose] faith abides in the witness of the spirit, which, as witness, is the spirit in mankind."<sup>18</sup> Philosophy, Hegel implies, is for an elite; but the solidarity of the state is protected by the convergence of the spirit in both reason and faith. Let us reserve the syntagmatic connection "state . . . religion . . . knowledge . . . conscience . . . caprice," for this is the essential structure of opposites and complements that we find in the Hegelian view of politics. A "neutral state," as Hegel theorized it amid the contrary thrusts of Revolution and Reaction, features an armature that protects the collectivity equally from irrational demands of religious domination and from the empty willfulness of subjective conviction. In other words, the enemies in the field are political Catholicism and atomistic liberalism. In the final

<sup>16</sup> Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, xiv, in *Works* (New York, 1951), p. 189.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. especially, Lucio Colletti, *Marxism and Hegel*, tr. L. Garner (London, 1973), pp. 28-39.

<sup>18</sup> Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (1830), ed. F. Nicolini and O. Pöggeler (Hamburg, 1959), paras. 572, 573 and A, pp. 450-451.

analysis, both these claimants are seen to have a similar *modus operandi*: Hegel's *tour de force* is to place Paris and Coblenz, the Hôtel de Ville and the Schönbrunn in the same sack.

Hegel is an uncomfortable, or at least nervous, figure in the Restoration. Retrospectively, certain commentators, beginning with Rudolf Haym (1857), have castigated him for sympathies with authoritarian reaction, and in recent times much polemic has been waged over Hegel's disapproval of the nationalist and liberal festival on the Wartburg in Thuringia in 1817. Yet it was precisely "unser Staatsphilosoph," as K. Rosenkranz described Hegel, who had written a year earlier: "How blind are they who may hope that institutions, constitutions, laws which no longer correspond to human manners, needs and opinions, from which the spirit has flown, can submit any longer; or that forms in which intellect and feeling now take no interest are powerful enough to be any longer the bond of a nation!"<sup>19</sup> Other evidence of Hegel's relatively advanced political position has been cited by others and need not be repeated here. He hoped, by means of the modern state—which would be not merely a *Rechtsstaat* but a moral plenum of unity and diversity—to achieve a concrete rationality which the French Revolution had consigned to the abstract.

To take the position that a reciprocity of rights and duties, developed dialectically in historical time and embodied in culture and institutions, could be conceived as the concrete warrant of collective freedom was surely not "liberal," but it was not, in its context, repressive or obscurantist. In Mannheim's words, it consisted in "raising an already present mode of experience to an intellectual level and . . . emphasizing the distinctive characteristics that mark it off from the liberal attitude toward the world."<sup>20</sup> It does not matter

<sup>19</sup> "On the Recent Domestic Affairs of Wurtemberg . . ." (1816), in Z. A. Pelczynski, ed., *Hegel's Political Writings* (Oxford, 1964), p. 244.

<sup>20</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York, 1936), p. 232.

so much what we label this position, as long as we see Hegel's original power of construction and do not make the error of confusing him with certain "conservatives" of his era, either those who had "learned and forgotten nothing" or those absorbed by Romanticism, rose-water Catholicism, absolutism, or a subjective caprice indistinguishable from the conscientious moral liberalism of "the good heart." On the other hand, Hegel shared with much of the "conservative" spectrum its valuation of order, of community, of the functionality of natural hierarchies, and its disparagement of the *homme abstrait* or social monad.

The key issue is religion, its interpretation and its uses and abuses. Historically, the Western Christian Church had claimed the authority to "bind" and to "loose." Through these means it sought to compel a behavioral compliance beyond the directives of other institutions and, indeed, beyond the temptations of personal caprice. The Hegelian state, a complex philosophical descendant of those of Bodin, Hobbes, and Rousseau, was intended to bind and liberate—liberate human energies systematically by binding them within sovereign legal and historical restraints. Already the Middle Ages had been dimly aware that *regnum* and *sacerdotium* were on a collision course. With the revitalization of secular political theory by Aquinas and his radical successors John of Paris, Marsilius of Padua, and Bartholus of Sassoferrato, the two-headed eagle began pecking at itself in earnest.

Hegel's work on the state can, in one sense, be seen as a consummation of the theoretical struggle between the spiritual and temporal powers, an extraordinarily sophisticated attempt to offer philosophical justification for the triumph of the latter. But Hegel did not treat secular primacy in the same way as Hobbes or Rousseau. He shared their appreciation of the power of religion and the wish to domesticate its strength for the purpose of secular goals; but he did not regard religion primarily as superstition, thereby desiring to reduce or "rationalize" its content and void it



of emotional power. Hegel's religion was neither the ordinances of Elizabeth I nor the moral maxims of the Savoyard vicar. Neither was it "civil" in the strong sense; it was intended to firm up the state and not interfere with its piloting, to be collaborative, and to be subordinate (like science), but not reduplicative in the form of an oath or civic creed. Part of this can be explained by the evolution of the Christian churches in Germany from the time of the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and their tangled relationship with the units of the Empire. Part has to do with the debilitation and erosion of Christian leadership in the period between the Wars of Religion and the collapse of the Ancien Régime in France. But part must also be explained by Hegel's respect for the religious form of consciousness, precisely because it could not be reduced to the deism of *Verstand*, because religion was always the natural expression of a people's genius, and because the Christian metaphors which fed philosophy functioned in religion not as falsehood, but as *Gefühl*. As compared with his great predecessor Rousseau, Hegel also applauded the common person's apprehension of the divine; but whereas Rousseau believed that the common man's religion was simple and aphoristic, Hegel regarded it as complex and symbolic.

The secularization of human life, begun in the Renaissance, has perhaps not yet run its course. In Hegel's time it was already far advanced. Only another generation would be needed to produce Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*, and Kierkegaard's existential despair; only two before Nietzsche would proclaim the "death of God." Moreover, Hegelian philosophy had generated these currents, at least in Germany. On the political plane, the fragmentation of the *respublica christiana*, the rise of the dynastic state, the religious wars, the failure of the Counter-Reformation, the pluralization of worship, and the growth of a utilitarian world view had all caused the Christian orbit to shrink. Moreover, religious faith had found its substitutes; the French Revolution was, in Burke's words,

"a Revolution of doctrine and theoretic dogma . . . [having] a much greater resemblance to those changes which have been made upon religious grounds, in which a spirit of proselytism makes an essential part."<sup>21</sup> Thus it did not seem so urgent for Hegel, as it had been for Bodin or Hobbes, to put religion in its place. But the task of accommodating it was still immediate and complex.

To be sure, Hegel did not have to set about lopping off one of the heads of the double eagle. In Prussia, particularly, state supervision of the clergy was second nature, "in order to ensure that religion is consonant with the state's own ends, namely the maintenance of order and the organization of public welfare."<sup>22</sup> But this does not reveal the entire fact of the matter. Hegel's discussion of the relationship between church and state in the extended commentary of paragraph 270 of the *Philosophy of Right* is a strategic hinge of that whole work. This is chiefly for two reasons. In the first place, Hegel had thoroughly explored the central significance of the private institutions of revealed religion. He knew far better than any mere *Aufklärer* the grip of this consciousness on communities and its resolute antagonism to the political health of a "free people." He knew also, paradoxically, that the most highly developed principle of freedom was inseparable from the progress of the Christian mind. The solution to this paradox was to opt for a speculatively exotic form of Protestantism (susceptible to serving the state) and to consign Catholicism to outer darkness; we shall return to this issue. The point here is that by reason of the structure of his own philosophy and his analysis of culture, Hegel treated the issue of religious trespass upon politics with the utmost seriousness, even if it some-

<sup>21</sup> "Thoughts on French Affairs," in R. A. Smith, ed., *Burke on Revolution* (New York, 1968), p. 186. Cf. Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, tr. S. Gilbert (New York, 1955), I, iii, 10-11.

<sup>22</sup> Henri Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism in Eighteenth Century Prussia*, tr. F. Jellinek (Chicago, 1974), p. 25.

times seemed that "the salt has lost its savor and all the basic rituals are accepted in silence."<sup>23</sup> Hegel gave the religious consciousness a wide place and often (especially in the *Phenomenology*) treated its avatars with a frenzied fascination worthy of Jonathan Swift's *Tale of a Tub*.

A second reason is more circumstantial. By 1820, anomalous or not, quasi-theocratic principles of government had taken wing again in Europe. Though they were not to carry the future, they were volatile and powerful enough to be taken seriously. Hegel did not dismiss all their claims out of hand—were they not, after all, the necessary antithesis to an inadequate Enlightenment? Yet he was also engaged in a philosophical enterprise that would expose *their* inadequacy. The princes of the victory—Alexander of Russia and Francis of Austria, aided by Count Metternich, whose scepticism in religion was matched only by his confidence in its social efficacy—had once more crutched the Throne with the Altar. Prussia was suspect to Metternich. He doubted the spine of Frederick William III, sought by every means to sabotage his dalliance with progressive ministers, and saw revolution and anarchy lurking in every village schoolroom, every seminary, not to mention every university auditorium. The evil ran deep. The Prussian teachers, Metternich wrote to Francis, "turn their attention to those who are to be educated, a plan which commends itself even to the most impatient, for the student generation includes, at the most, a space of four years. Now, the systematic preparation of youth for this infamous object has lasted already more than one of these generations. A whole class of future State officials, professors, and incipient literary men, is here ripened for revolution."<sup>24</sup> Hegel was, of course, one of these teachers, and we know what some of his pupils would become! Al-

<sup>23</sup> Hegel, *Sämmlte Werke*, ed. H. Glockner (Stuttgart, 1927–1940), XVI, 351.

<sup>24</sup> "Metternich to the Emperor Francis, Teplitz, 1 August 1819," in Mack Walker, ed., *Metternich's Europe* (New York, 1968), p. 85.



though it seems strange in retrospect to see Phrygian bonnets planted on the heads of Altenstein, Hardenberg, and Humboldt, this reactionary snapshot reveals the distance between Hegelian state philosophy and the official Restoration. Hegel's cool refusal of the fevers of the red and the black has no resemblance to Metternich's panic. Again, this torrent of words by Metternich: "Kings have to calculate the chances of their very existence in the immediate future; passions are let loose, and league together to overthrow everything which society respects as the basis of its existence; religion, public morality, laws, customs, rights, and duties are all attacked, confounded, overthrown, or called into question. . . . Two elements alone remain in all their strength, and never cease to exercise their indestructible influence with equal power. These are the precepts of morality, religious as well as social, and the necessities created by locality."<sup>25</sup> Hegel, statist, monarchist, and opponent of revolutionary excess, could have found this indictment (actually addressed to the Württemberg estates) as a response to the authoritarian theocrats: "[They] seem to have slept through the last twenty-five years, possibly the richest that world history has had, and for us the most instructive, because it is to them that our world and our ideas belong."<sup>26</sup>

How did the leading reactionary theorists look at the state, and in what respect can their views be distinguished from those of Hegel? Adam Müller, a gifted spokesman, delivered his *Elemente* lectures to an exclusive audience in Dresden in the winter of 1808–1809. Here he declared the state to be "the eternally moving realm of all ideas; the bodily, physical, tangible life does not suffice to describe the state. We were compelled to rescue from oblivion everything invisible, mind, custom, heart, the whole idealistic activity of man; we were compelled to indicate the citizens' thoughts which have been turned away from the

<sup>25</sup> "Confession of Faith: Metternich's Secret Memorandum to the Emperor Alexander, 13 December 1820," *ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>26</sup> "On the Recent Domestic Affairs of Wurtemberg . . .," p. 282.

state, when we endeavoured above to comprehend the nature of the state."<sup>27</sup> Further, "if we exclude forever from this association even the most unimportant part of the human being, if we separate private life from public life even at only one point, then we can no longer perceive the state as a phenomenon of life."<sup>28</sup> In a later writing, Müller speaks of "two groups of statesmen and political theorists . . . the first constructs the state in the clouds; the other upon the dogmas of the Christian religion."<sup>29</sup> His projected journal would not accept articles whose arguments did not conform with Christian doctrine.

The theses of Müller and others have some resemblances to Hegel's own, and there is no point in dodging the fact. Hegel's state, too, has its peculiar sort of theological basis, is organistic, and requires the services of a monarch. Conceivably, both the Hegelian moment and the Romantic moment have their place in the syndrome that Mannheim labels "conservative thought."<sup>30</sup> But the differences are equally striking. Hegel acknowledged the problem of the state as a consequence of the "separation of private life from public life," and saw this as an inevitable result of the evolution of consciousness, while it was an error or disaster to Müller. There is no such dialectic in the Romantics; only nostalgia or fiat. Wherever nostalgia appears in Hegel, it is for the beautiful institutions of a "free people" (that is, the Athenians),<sup>31</sup> not for a papering over of medieval incoherence. It is precisely Hegel's understanding of the past that allows him both a whiff of the human comedy in the present and the intellectual capacity to fear the future. But, most importantly, Hegel's interpretation of the state is

<sup>27</sup> A. Müller, *Elemente der Staatskunst*, Lecture I, in H. S. Reiss, ed., *Political Thought of the German Romantics* (Oxford, 1955), p. 156.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>29</sup> *Deutsche Staatsanzeigen* (1819), III, 411.

<sup>30</sup> See K. Mannheim's "Das konservative Denken," in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, February and April 1927.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Judith N. Shklar, *Freedom and Independence: A Study of Hegel's "Phenomenology of Mind"* (Cambridge, 1976).

based on his familiar, if not ultimately persuasive, view that the modern state inherits the mission of freedom implicit in the speculative principles of Reformation Christianity. Those principles, while forwarding subjectivity and the separation of public and private goals, also are held to contain, in mediated form, possibilities for reconquering public virtue under the guidance of philosophy.

This is a complex position. Certainly it is not a blanket endorsement for either Christianity or Protestantism as these concepts are commonly treated. Nor can we simplify the problem by saying that Hegel's mordant anti-Catholicism allows for the justification of a Protestant spirit in politics. After all, Protestantism has little to do with those Athenian feats of citizenship that Hegel so much relished, nor, in its severer forms (witness the intellectual tribulations of the classically trained John Milton) was it even as hospitable to the "golden apples in silver bowls" of antiquity as was Catholicism. Indeed, as Hegel sensed and as Max Weber later endeavored to establish, Protestantism had inspired a many-sided individualism run amok into capitalism, Kantianism, utilitarianism, and other forms. Moreover, Protestantism had its own authoritarian vigor, its Calvinist political enclaves cramped with fear and trembling. It could even induce theocratic results akin to Catholicism—a Catholicism of the state. Not all the Romantics of the stripe of Adam Müller and Schlegel converted. Even into a period far beyond Hegel's lifetime there would be influential Protestant theorists of a reactionary stripe who would exhort the Prussian state not to modernize itself, and would declare, like Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach: "The state is God's noblest creation, but the Church is *more* than a creation."<sup>32</sup> Or, "if the German Empire ever separated from the Church, it would no longer be a *German* Empire."<sup>33</sup> This reference

<sup>32</sup> Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Das andere Preussen: Konservative Gestalten und Probleme im Zeitalter Friedrich Wilhelms IV* (Honnaf am Rhein, 1957), p. 21.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.



to Gerlach, who lived and wrote into the Bismarckian period, should suffice to show that Hegel was not facing a paper tiger in 1820.<sup>34</sup>

Unwaveringly hostile to the Catholic institutions and belief system, Hegel retroactively theorized a Protestantism cut to the measure of his system and to the recovery of politics, and located this phenomenon in the German Reformation. While the Marxists (here again taking their cue from Hegel) were later to argue that the Germans had experienced a revolution only in thought, not in deeds, Hegel was bold enough to suggest that the "religious revolution" of the sixteenth century had laid the preconditions for an orderly political access to modernity; at least such was his hope. As for Catholicism, it was destructive to all politics. The many unflattering portraits of Roman Christianity in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* make this crystal clear. With Catholicism, in the words of Karl Jaspers, "contempt for the world became domination of the world; contemplation became an undeviating will; freedom through profound reflection became union through coercion; the knowledge and speculation grounded in nonknowledge became a body of doctrine; the temporal movement of searching became the world of dogma, immutable, subject to no doubt, no longer an object of penetrating thought but a presupposition."<sup>35</sup>

In *Encyclopedia* paragraph 552A, Hegel raises the issue most squarely. Catholicism is characterized by "sanctity" (*Heiligkeit*); Protestantism, correctly understood, by "ethic-ality" (*Sittlichkeit*). In Catholicism, as in precritical metaphysics, God is conceived as an external object and as a "bad infinity," sundered from man, existing in the beyond (*Jenseits*). Thus, approximation to God can mean only flight from the world and a contempt of politics. In Protes-

<sup>34</sup> For the activity of the Gerlach brothers and their intellectual circle, see Theodore S. Hamerow, *Restoration, Revolution, Reaction: Economics and Politics in Germany, 1815-1871* (Princeton, 1958), pp. 71-72.

<sup>35</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Plato and Augustine* (New York, 1962), p. 107.

tantism, however, God is not displaced outside the world but, rather, infuses it with His presence. Thus, in contrasting the two modes of Christianity, Hegel feels able to speak of "the *Sittlichkeit* of an obedience devoted to the law of the state as against the *Heiligkeit* of an obedience from which law and duty are absent and where the conscience is enslaved."<sup>36</sup>

The preceding discussion suggests the centrality of the religious issue for Hegel's view of the state. In dwelling on this matter I have sought to establish the syntagmatic relationship "religion . . . knowledge . . . church . . . state," which I believe to be critical to understanding both the *meaning* and *function* of the state for Hegel and the actuality of this problem in his time and place. Of course, if we are envisaging this problem from a strictly political angle, it might be better to say that the religious question is subsumed in the more general problem of "revolution" versus "reaction," where, as it should be quite clear, Hegel steered a middle, though not "liberal," course.<sup>37</sup> But inasmuch as the religious question remained in 1820 inseparable from both revolution and reaction, there is a natural advantage in highlighting it. Chateaubriand was not simply blowing off nostalgic steam when he wrote, at this time, that "the most powerful efforts of the [revolutionary] party are aimed against [religion], because it is the cornerstone of legitimacy."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Enzyklopädie*, p. 435. This extended passage amplifies and reweaves the important discussion of *Philosophy of Right* 270A, and is, on the whole, the more decisive statement of Hegel's treatment of church and state.

<sup>37</sup> Correctly or not, Hegel saw "liberalism" (a new word in his time) as inseparable from intellectual fantasy, lawlessness, and revolution. This does not mean that he failed to share certain assumptions with Whigs like Constant and Brougham. But his philosophy was not theirs, nor was he as complacent about the blessings of an individualist revolution.

<sup>38</sup> François-René de Chateaubriand, *De la Monarchie selon la Charte*, in *Mélanges politiques*, II, *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1827), XXX, 204.

Two other points deserve comment here. First, we should note that Hegel's so-called "defense of the Prussian state" is part and parcel of his perception of the religious basis of the state by way of Protestant immanentism and the recreation of a modern *Sittlichkeit*. Secondly, it is of great significance that the first stirrings of the Young Hegelians against the master's "system" were in the religious sphere, with politically mixed or neutral implications. While it is true that some of Hegel's unruly disciples believed that he had simply handed them a passkey to unlock the door of religious phantasmagoria, and true, as well, that, on a sociological plane, they were enacting the famous "German ideology" of rebelling through ideas and not deeds, we should not slight the objective importance of the assault on religion as a preliminary unraveling of the political solutions which Hegel had proposed. Too much enthusiasm in Hegel scholarship has gone into the miraculous runaway powers of the dialectic, while not enough serious attention has been given to syntagmatic changes of structure affecting the state, changes wrought largely by the political perceptions of the intelligentsia. At this stage in our analysis, let us say only that a translation of the syntagma "politics-religion" to that of "politics-society" changes Hegel's plot and plan in the hands of his epigoni. It is a translation that his philosophy prepared, but which was, at best, ambiguous within his own compass.

The issue of the "Protestant" and "political" state now deserves some further clarification. Since Eric Weil wrote *Hegel et l'état* it should be understood that Hegel was not defending the specific Prussian state of his time in its literal presence, for that regime did not possess the institutions that he commends.<sup>39</sup> Hegel's use of the concept "Germanic" further suggests that he intended our word "Teutonic"—that he was generally alluding to political features latent in Protestant or semi-Protestant Europe (in this re-

<sup>39</sup> E. Weil, *Hegel et l'état* (Paris, 1950), esp. pp. 12-14.



spect resembling Montesquieu).<sup>40</sup> However, Hegel had deep misgivings about special developments in both France and England, while dismissing North America as a materialistic "system of needs" and a sectarianism run riot, having the mere rudiments of a state.<sup>41</sup> Before proceeding to this discussion we should spend some time on the other pole of Hegel's assault—the vagaries of the subjective consciousness.

As Judith Shklar has well put it, Hegel launches his most brilliant salvos against "Europe's flawed public culture." Hegel never doubted either the necessary role of subjectivity or its leavening function in modern life, but he deplored its vitiating effects on civic human enterprise. Paradoxically, that event (the French Revolution) which had raised reason to the status of a conscious political goal had abolished the *Gemeinwesen* in individualistic carnage.<sup>42</sup> As Shklar continues: "The reigning thought of the Revolution was unrestricted individual independence and it survived its political disasters, though in an altered form. It is internalized as pure moral freedom, as Kantian moral autonomy, and it has no immediate political implications. Indeed it is both a response to and a perpetuation of a political vacuum."<sup>43</sup> Above all others, Hegel saw this as a chain of events. It was his grasp of "objectivity" and "phenomenology," the exchange of "thought" and "will," that permitted such an intellectual triumph. Over the millenia the antipolitical philosophies of Hellenism had produced the modern climate of liberalism. He castigated that liberalism, first of all because it was abstract, forgetful of its historical journey, and second because it was not public-regarding. In thinking to restore politics and freedom, it based these on an "ego"

<sup>40</sup> Although Hegel was certainly not a partisan of the "beau système" found in the German forests; his attack against *Volksrecht* is blistering. Cf. *Philosophy of Right*, para. 211A, pp. 135–136.

<sup>41</sup> See ahead, Chapter VII, pp. 184–185.

<sup>42</sup> *Phenomenology of Mind*, pp. 608–610.

<sup>43</sup> Shklar, *Freedom and Independence*, p. 180.

which it took to be timeless and representative of all other egos. Though, in history, institutions and ideas perish (*zu Grunde gehen*), it is so that they may become fertilizer. New stages of life are created out of agonic processes imbedded in their development, never made, *de novo*, like the Revolutionary calendar. As Chateaubriand put it: "There can never be a political change in a people unless it has taken root in the old political order which it has supplanted."<sup>44</sup> Revolutionaries like Sieyès and Robespierre did not believe this; historians from the time of Tocqueville on have shown it to be the case.

Hegel was particularly exercised about the caprice and lack of ethical content of the individualism of his own time. He detested any situation in which "ethics is reduced to the special theory of life held by the individual and his private conviction."<sup>45</sup> He argued for authoritative institutions that could filter, aggregate, and conform individual preferences, for he realized that the imperialism of private desire could become the most arbitrary tyranny. He thought, too, that contemporary philosophy had encouraged this result: "The highwater mark of subjectivity at the level of morality . . . [is] the form in which evil has blossomed in our present epoch, a result due to philosophy, i.e. to a shallowness of thought which has twisted a profound concept into this shape and usurped the name of philosophy, just as it has arrogated to evil the name of good."<sup>46</sup> Finally, Hegel maintained: "When [conscience] appeals only to itself for a decision, it is directly at variance from what it wishes to be, namely the rule for a mode of conduct which is rational, absolutely valid, and universal."<sup>47</sup> To lean on subjective conviction is to disintegrate the difference between impor-

<sup>44</sup> *Monarchie selon la Charte*, p. 226.

<sup>45</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 140A, p. 99.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94. The final phrase of the passage shows how much Nietzsche learned from the "children of Protestant pastors" whom he so much despised.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 137A, p. 91.

tance and triviality.<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately, that triviality is not so paltry if it seizes power over others. This happens when a subjective caprice masters the state. Its complement is the arbitrariness of "sanctity," which achieves a similar result. Hegel would not have agreed with Burke that the French Revolution was essentially *religious* in consequence. However, he saw in both reaction and revolution an arbitrary incompleteness.

Now we can return to Hegel's assessment of developments in the successor states of the Wars of Religion. If he did not exalt his own Prussia, he nevertheless found virtue in its underlying principle—only the principle. Like other observers, Hegel knew the faults of his culture. In his youth he had savagely deprecated Germany, using Greece as an ideal.<sup>49</sup> Surely he would have agreed with a journal article written while he was a teenager that asserted: "The third main cause of our ennui seems to be that we lack topics of conversation calculated to captivate every listener at a mixed gathering. In Greece and Rome the state supplied this topic, and this is still so in England, Holland, North America, and other free countries, including the Free Towns of the Empire."<sup>50</sup> In his mature years, Hegel cultivated reservations about the "freedom" of other countries, but he did not see his own as a utopia. Hegel praised "Prussianism" because, to his way of thinking, it was not tarred with the flaws of other states—or at least had not acquired them.

Prussia avoided the rampant electoral corruption and deficiency of centralized authority that Hegel perceived in England. He shared none of the Romantics' ambiguous approval of the English constitution, and attacked especially the quaintness of the common law: "material changes demanded by rational law . . . have been secured already

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 140A, p. 100.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. H. Nohl, ed., *Hegels Theologische Jugendschriften* (Tübingen, 1907), p. 358.

<sup>50</sup> *Teutsche Merkur* (1785), II, 143 ff. Cited by Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism*, p. 161.



in many civilized continental states, especially in German countries, but the need for them seems almost to have gone to sleep in England."<sup>51</sup> English law was an "Augean stable." Another issue was corruption: "The English people is the least political; political life has gone to the dogs (*ganz schwach*). Selling of votes, like the Roman people in the last phase of the Republic. . . . *Freedom*—for money—and my vote to the highest bidder."<sup>52</sup> Finally, there was the question of a properly balanced constitution, which for Hegel meant a leading position for the Crown: "In England the monarchical element in the constitution lacks the power which in other states has earned gratitude to the Crown for the transition from a legal system based purely on positive rights to one based on the principles of real freedom, a transition wholly exempt from earthquake, violence, and robbery."<sup>53</sup>

In Hegel's opinion English politics was reprobate, askew, unregenerate. The Reform Bill, as he estimated, would "preserve enough of the old system to ensure that politics in many places [would continue] to be dominated by the same kind of people as before,"<sup>54</sup> but without reclaiming a rational political development. In France, the situation was not merely eccentric but desperate, an archetypal conflict of arbitrary despotism and anarchic self-interest. Here there was no end of the fatal collision between political Catholicism and atomistic liberalism which the great Revolution had produced. For Hegel, France was the state where the religious consciousness had no meeting ground with the political consciousness. Each was out to slay the other without quarter: no settlement could be obtained without a revolu-

<sup>51</sup> "English Reform Bill," in Pelczynski, ed., *Hegel's Political Writings*, p. 311.

<sup>52</sup> "Zum Aufsatz über die englische Reformbill," in *Berliner Schriften*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1956), p. 782.

<sup>53</sup> "English Reform Bill," p. 330.

<sup>54</sup> D. G. Wright, *Democracy and Reform, 1815-1885* (London, 1970), p. 11.

tion of the state or a reformation of the church.<sup>55</sup> The incipience of political parties was an ominous sign, especially since they enlisted philosophers and perverted philosophy.<sup>56</sup> Above all, the doctrine of "abstract right" was once more flourishing: "Instead of that activity of institutions in which public order and genuine freedom consists, recourse was had once more to those generalities which, by what they demand in the way of freedom, make constitutional law self-contradictory from the start. . . . In the circle of this extreme contradiction a nation revolves once it has been dominated by these abstract categories."<sup>57</sup> France remained the paradigmatic example of political conflict as this was understood even before the "social question" arose.

Then there was Germany, or more specifically Prussia. Throughout the Napoleonic period and the earliest years of the Restoration, Prussia and some of the South German states had teetered on the brink of reform. The reforms had chiefly been authored by bureaucratic and "modernizing" nobles such as Montgelas and Vom Stein; they were secular, "rationalizing" (in the Weberian sense) and "civil" in content. Prussia had the advantage, in the eyes of Hegel and others, of possessing—except for its otherwise "advanced" Rhineland provinces—a small Catholic population composed of little else but Polish peasants. Thus, in contrast to France, it could sponsor the "neutral state" without internal combustion, while, in contrast to England, it had preserved a potent monarchy and bureaucracy which could be rebalanced against renewed "estates" and "corporations." Although Hegel submerged religion beneath philosophy in the realm of knowledge and beneath political authority in the sphere of ethical life, he based his position, as we have seen, on a transfiguration of Lutheran materials. In Germany the Protestant religion had evoked "a sentiment which . . . is the fountain of all the equitable arrangements that prevail with regard to private right and the constitu-

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Karl Rosenkranz, *Hegels Leben* (Berlin, 1844), pp. 417 ff.

<sup>56</sup> *Berliner Schriften*, p. 704.

<sup>57</sup> "English Reform Bill," p. 329.

tion of the state."<sup>58</sup> Thus, "the formal principle of philosophy in Germany encounters a concrete real world in which spirit finds inward satisfaction and in which conscience is at rest."<sup>59</sup> This may seem like an aberrant description of the evolution of the German public philosophy, but it is central to Hegel's cultural analysis. Arguing this issue when the syntagmatic relationship was changing, Marx made a kind of cruel mincemeat out of Hegel's sovereign claim in his *Critique of the Philosophy of Right* (1843). But Marx himself committed a similar error when he substituted Germany's capacity for revolution in place of its capacity for creating a modern state.

It is interesting how the Hegelian interpretation of the German Reformation both parallels and diverges from the Marxist one. In both instances religious reform or controversy veils the real issues at play. Hegel believed that "Luther had secured to mankind spiritual freedom and the reconciliation [of the objective and subjective] in the concrete,"<sup>60</sup> but that it remained for philosophy to pin down these gains by replacing the mode of revelation with its justification of secular institutions. On the other hand, Engels argued that "if the class struggles of that time appear to bear religious earmarks, if the interests, requirements, and demands of the various classes hid themselves behind a religious screen, it little changes the actual situation, and is to be explained by the conditions of the time."<sup>61</sup> A common *point d'appui* is to be discovered in the "second order" interpretation of the German religious revolution. For Hegel

<sup>58</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 444.   <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 441. Cf. Von Haller, letter to his family declaring his conversion to the Catholic Church: "the revolution of the sixteenth century, which we call the Reformation, is in its principle, its means, and its results, the perfect image and forerunner of the revolution of our own time; and my hatred for the latter causes me a repugnance for the former." Quoted from Jacques Droz, ed., *Le Romantisme politique en Allemagne* (Paris, 1963), p. 193.

<sup>61</sup> Friedrich Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, in Leonard Krieger, ed., *The German Revolutions* (Chicago, 1967), p. 34.



and for Engels a watershed of religious struggle masks *real* interests, which are, respectively, the philosophical germination of the modern state and the explanation of the origins of a social combat demystifying that state even before it had emerged in its clarity. Hence the Hegelian view that the Reformation qualified as "the German Revolution," and that the French Revolution needed only to be profitably observed and absorbed; hence the Marxist view, prefigured by observers such as Heine, that the German Revolution, conditioned by its philosophical spasms, lay in the future and would perhaps be decisive.

This may seem a roundabout way to come at the question of Hegel's "neutral state" when there has been, as yet, no description of its characteristics. In fact, we have proceeded largely *a contrario*. This has been necessary, first, if we were to acknowledge that Hegel did not theorize the state in a vacuum but in a living texture of events; second, if we were to stress the syntagmatic change in the notion of the state that was Hegel's legacy to the future; and finally, if we were to avoid the anachronism of reading back on Hegel data and concerns of an industrial age just opening.

A passage from the *Philosophy of Right* illustrates how Hegel closed the present circle of argument, at least to his satisfaction. Having related Kantian moral autonomy to utilitarian political economy *via* the principle of subjectivity, he also related doctrinaire Catholicism to arbitrary caprice in his blistering attack on von Haller. Von Haller had failed utterly, in Hegel's view, to give any systematic philosophical grounding to his "Throne and Altar" interpretation of the state; he had appealed to no principle higher than feeling:

Herr von Haller might have discovered by his "religious feeling" that he should rather bewail his condition as the hardest chastisement of God. For the hardest thing which man can experience is to be so far excluded from thought and reason, from respect for the laws, and from

knowing how infinitely important and divine it is that the duties of the state and the rights of the citizens, as well as the rights of the state and the duties of the citizens, should be defined by law—to be so far excluded from all this that absurdity can foist itself upon him as the word of God.<sup>62</sup>

Although von Haller, on the face of it, has very little connection with Fries—Hegel's liberal *bête noire*—or with the subjective consciousness that finds its outlet in antinomian rebellion, this passage shows that Hegel perceived in the doctrines of Fries and von Haller alike a quality which a recent writer has called sentimentality, and further described as "detaching symbols of strong feeling intended to signify an experiential whole and a subsequent inflation of the symbol to cover all experience indiscriminately, or none."<sup>63</sup> The wheel of "sanctity" comes full circle in the whinings of private conscience.

What, then, is the nature of the "neutral state" that Hegel proposes, abstracted from "the serial exposition of the relationships . . . necessitated by the Idea of freedom" which the *Philosophy of Right* develops? It will evidently not be a "liberal" state, minimal and responsive to the caprice of its rights-holders, or a democratic state based on equalities that Hegel was disinclined to allow.<sup>64</sup> If these corruptions of "neutrality" dismay us, we might still reflect that our placement of such values as "legitimacy" and "variety" above those of "structure" and "effectiveness" often reduces the state to being the prize and purchase of aggressive groups and their leaders. The only alternative to dogfighting, as Rousseau sensed, would be a state as persistently populist, small, and monoform as that which could gather

<sup>62</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 258A, p. 160n.

<sup>63</sup> Nicholas Haines, "Politics and Protest: Hegel and Social Criticism," *Political Science Quarterly*, LXXXVI, 3 (September 1971), 417.

<sup>64</sup> E.g., *Philosophy of Right*, para. 278A, p. 180; para. 303A, p. 198.

its members for deliberation under a great oak.<sup>65</sup> Instead, the "neutrality" of Hegel's state consists in its conjugation of unity and division—a special elaboration of his early principle of "the identity of identity and non-identity."

The Hegelian state should be understood ideologically as an ideal immanent in Hegel's reading of the evolution of Western culture, parrying the divisive urge implicit in liberalism's original rights as well as the nostalgic mystifications of conservatism. Realist in power and idealist in purpose, it binds and liberates. The state is the organ or oracle that overcomes both the antinomian urge toward dissolution and the bondage of an antiworldly Church Militant. It liberates man because it frees him from these tyrannies and appetites, obliging him to conform in a venture that is rational, cooperative, and of human size and scale. Finally, just as it encompasses the collective and personal and the divine and human, it also stands as a "present" system between the buffetings of memory in the past and desire in the future. It is "will become thought, and thought become will."

The aspects of the state's neutrality are the following:

1. *Knowledge*. For Hegel, the "common life," or as he sometimes writes, the *lebendiges Leben*, is impossible without a guarantee of objectified truth. The state, as he puts it, "works and acts by reference to consciously adopted ends, known principles, and laws which are not merely implicit but are actually present to consciousness; and further, it acts with precise knowledge of existing conditions and circumstances, inasmuch as its actions have a bearing on these."<sup>66</sup> The agents of the Hegelian state are empowered to know and predict. Both religion and science are contained within this higher form of judgment.

2. "*Bildung*." The agents, the eyes and ears of the state, require an education suited to their task. This education, as

<sup>65</sup> On the residues of this kind of popular sovereignty, see Benjamin R. Barber, *The Death of Communal Liberty* (Princeton, 1974).

<sup>66</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 270, p. 165.



suggested by Hegel in the rectorial addresses of his Nuremberg years, will be classical, humanistic, and political in thrust. When Gramsci writes in the *Quaderni del carcere*, against the Gentile reforms of 1923, that "the traditional school was oligarchic because it was intended for the new generation of the ruling class, destined to rule in its turn; but it was not oligarchic in its mode of teaching,"<sup>67</sup> he reflects his Hegelian background; for it was this old school that "combated folklore . . . [and was based] essentially on an awareness . . . that there exist social and state laws which are a product of human activity, which are established by men and can be altered by men in the interests of their collective development."<sup>68</sup> This is exactly the kind of thing Hegel had in mind, not for the working class, but for his *Staatsbeamten*. To be sure, Marx witheringly attacks Hegel for presuming that the state bureaucracy could be anything but a self-interested and self-serving category: "The man within the civil servant is supposed to secure the civil servant against himself. What a unity! Mental counterpoise. What a dualistic category!"<sup>69</sup> Yet Marx's well-targeted scorn has not prevented states, even Marxist ones, from reposing trust in dense bureaucracies.

3. *Law*. The Hegelian state is a lawful medium in which "persons" (that is, abstract rights-holders) exchange performances—the realm of Aristotelian commutative justice. To be sure, Hegel's use of the word *Recht* (*ius*) goes far beyond the scope of civil law to include the entire content of morality, social ethics, and world history, all of what we

<sup>67</sup> Antonio Gramsci, "On Education," in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York, 1971), p. 40.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>69</sup> Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's "Philosophy of Right,"* ed. J. O'Malley (Cambridge, 1970), p. 53. However, even Hans Rosenberg, who wrote an extremely deprecatory book about the evolution of the Prussian state system, could say of the bureaucrats: "Theirs was the obligation to practice in their calling unswerving submission, thrift, sobriety, repression of the passions, and stern self-discipline." *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy, and Autocracy: The Prussian Experience, 1660–1815* (Boston, 1966), p. 92.

might call "practical reason."<sup>70</sup> Thus the customary German notion of *Rechtsstaat* is both exceeded and enriched. We customarily think of civil (positive) law—"real legality"—with its inevitable element of coercion as clashing with "higher law," unenforceable but encompassing juster, more universal, or more ideal standards. Not so Hegel. For him the contradiction is contained within positive law itself and it describes the tension between the law and the claims or preferences of the willing individuals: "Here then [in the law of the land] an antagonism is possible between what ought to be and what is, between the absolutely right which stands unaltered and the arbitrary determination of what is to be recognized as right."<sup>71</sup> Hegel's task is the severe philosophical one of reconciling right and morality in a system of a higher order simultaneously available to men and to the demands of reason. For, "in the right, man must meet with his own reason; consequently, he must consider the rationality of the right, and this is the task of our science in contrast with the positive study of law which often had to do only with contradictions."<sup>72</sup>

In his quest for a philosophically cogent theory of law, Hegel perhaps attempts to cram too much meaning or paradox into the key sentence of the *Philosophy of Right*: "The basis of right is, in general, mind; its precise place and point of origin is the will. The will is free, so that . . . the system of right is the realm of freedom made actual, the world of mind brought forth out of itself like a second nature."<sup>73</sup> Despite the cryptic loftiness of Hegel's attempt to join reason and will, nature and ideality, history and truth in a single comprehension of the lawful, and despite his frequent contempt for the kind of political science that constructs a state on abstract notions of contract and personality,<sup>74</sup> the sphere of abstract right is, nevertheless, the formal

<sup>70</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 33Z, p. 233.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, Preface Z, p. 224. <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, Introduction, para. 4, p. 20.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, cf. para. 183, p. 123, and para. 182Z, pp. 266–267.

embodiment of law and the "primary mode of freedom."<sup>75</sup> "Justice," Hegel writes, "is a big thing in civil society. Given good laws, a state can flourish, and freedom of property is a fundamental condition of its prosperity."<sup>76</sup> This is an abstract warrant of both the ground of and the need for the "neutral state," where particular interests "gain explicit recognition for their right," and not its denial.<sup>77</sup> "In a well organized monarchy," according to Hegel, "the objective aspect belongs to law alone."<sup>78</sup>

4. *Middle Class*. Hegel specifically nominated a middle class, "the class in which the consciousness of right and the developed intelligence of the mass of the people is found,"<sup>79</sup> to service the state, checked by the monarchy from above and the people organized in corporations from below. The line of reasoning here is more Aristotelian than modern. Not only were the so-called "middle classes" of Hegel's time endowed with an education that was set against aristocratic caprice, but it had come to be granted, as in Aristotle, that the middle mediated between the apex and base of the social pyramid. There was as yet no loathsome, Philistine, and indolent *bourgeoisie*. Although the Prussian aristocracy was, on balance, more "service-minded" than the French, it is critical to recognize, in the words of Brunschwig, that "owing . . . to their connections with the clergy, who are members of the same class, the burghers have gained a species of monopoly of moral judgments. . . . Since an individual seldom creates his own means of expression, a nobleman who wants to think can only do so in bourgeois terms; and so public opinion under the Prussian monarchy is the opinion of the middle classes."<sup>80</sup> Hegel was trying elliptically to express this sociological truth. As for the lower classes, they were largely illiterate and politically incompetent, through no fault of their own.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 33Z, p. 233.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 229Z, p. 275.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 260, p. 160. Cf. *Enzyklopädie* (1830), para. 502A, p. 397.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 280Z, p. 289.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 297, p. 193.

<sup>80</sup> Brunschwig, *Enlightenment and Romanticism*, p. 121.



5. *Monarchy*. It is not so bizarre that Hegel made monarchy the linchpin of his "neutral state." Those who chide him for not following the consequences of *Sittlichkeit* to an updated democratic republicanism are more theoretical and less historical than he. France went twelve years without a monarch, and it had not proved an edifying experiment. Other than that, there were only the minirepublics of Switzerland and the odd and distant American federation to look to. Monarchy appeared resurgent—though what kind of a monarchy? The problem in Hegel's time was, therefore, not to eliminate it with a "people's government," but to reanimate it under constitutional guarantees. Hegel's position on monarchy is quite *sui generis*, to render it functional and majestic at the same time. He makes its presence as unquestionable as God's, so to speak "natural";<sup>81</sup> but his monarch is no god, except in representing the majesty of the state, the "actuality of concrete freedom."<sup>82</sup> This is the *Aufhebung* of the Protestant religion into philosophy and practice. But it also is Hegel's strategic location of what Benjamin Constant called a "neutral power," above and beyond the jurisdictional disputes of the ministers, the bureaucracy, the Estates, and public opinion. Hegel believed in the Tory qualities of balance and harmony. Though he was prepared for the hereditary monarch to be a nitwit, he hoped for a visible and exalted symbol of unity in the throne. While he would not have endorsed the sentence of Coriolanus, "I am the storehouse and the shop/Of the whole body . . .,"<sup>83</sup> he still saw the monarch as a focal point where the wills of society were joined. Thus he would not have disagreed with the speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury:

I this infer,  
That many things having full reference  
To one consent may work contrariously,  
As many arrows loosed several ways  
Come to one mark, as many ways meet in one town,

<sup>81</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 280, pp. 184–185.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 260, p. 160.

<sup>83</sup> Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, I, i.

## THE "NEUTRAL STATE"

As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea,  
As many lines close in the dial's centre;  
So may a thousand actions, once afoot,  
End in one purpose, and be all well borne  
Without defeat.<sup>84</sup>

The Hegelian king promoted "neutrality," not because he could command capriciously, but because he could aggregate the organized wills of society. This was the functional sense of monarchy in the modern *polis*. All proportions guarded, Hegel would have endorsed the view of the deputy Thouret when he declared: "Henceforth the respect and veneration of the people for their kings will be firmly connected to the functions which they carry out."<sup>85</sup> But he could not have gone so far as to acquiesce in Mirabeau's siren song to Louis XVI in 1790:

Only compare the present state of affairs with the old order and you will find that it has reassuring features and gives grounds for hope. The majority of the edicts issued by the National Assembly are obviously favorable to monarchical government. Is it not something to be done with *parlements*, with *pays d'état*, with an all-powerful priesthood, with privilege and the nobility? The modern idea of a single class of citizens on an equal footing would certainly have pleased Richelieu, since surface equality of this kind facilitates the exercise of power. Absolute government during several successive reigns could not have done so much as this one year of Revolution to make good the King's authority.<sup>86</sup>

Mirabeau's gamble was on longer odds than Hegel's. As Hegel later had reason to know, the revolutionary leveling of all estates, privileges, and particularities between the

<sup>84</sup> Shakespeare, *Henry V*, I, ii.

<sup>85</sup> To the National Constituent Assembly, 28 March 1791.

<sup>86</sup> Mirabeau's letter is cited by A. de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, tr. Stuart Gilbert (New York, 1955), I, ii, p. 8.

monarch and nation had resulted only in "a maximum of frightfulness and terror."<sup>87</sup> Thus he was disposed to reforge the state out of old and new, placing the monarch in a position of clearer function but less power than the rhapsody of Mirabeau's secret note to the Court suggests. Still, the monarch was an indispensable symbol of the unity and neutrality of a complex interest-state. He was a single estate; a member of no class or interest group.

✓ 6. *Mediation*. The Hegelian state was, as the current word goes, "elitist," but its elitism was controlled from diverse directions. Once again, the reader should not quiver in pious anger about Hegel's omission of the lower classes, for they had no political capacity in 1820; their world, as yet—significantly noted by Faust—was the sphere of religion and they were imbedded in the "system of needs." This fact aside, Hegel suggested several mediations to promote neutrality. First of all, the monarch would be encircled by his educated counsellors, who, as the system dictated, would be subject to censure if policies failed. Allied to this, there was the position of the executive, formed by careerism, examination, and practical tests of competence. There was also the checking power of the Estates, which did not govern, but were intended to affect policies on specific and local details.<sup>88</sup> Hegel also wished for a robust municipal life and a free play of "corporations." These latter were both chartered and spontaneous outgrowths of the professions and *métiers*, both educating facilities and checks on the executive and the Estates. In terms of his own culture, Hegel was an apt pupil of Montesquieu. Science also checked ignorance; and a state-fortifying religion, which was not a "religion of the state," curbed runaway sectarianism.

But isn't Hegel's "neutral state," thus described, a preposterous illusion? Aren't states, by their nature, aggregations of "particular wills" bent on domination, restrictive of the liberties of others, always falsely expressive of the "will of

<sup>87</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 258A, p. 157.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 301A, p. 196.



the whole"? Let us divide this criticism into two parts. The most vulnerable question is this: could we today imagine a "just state" run on Hegelian principles? Here, it is hard not to answer no. Even though a straight-laced historical judgment might grant the Hegelian institutions some sense, they simply do not fit into our political development and the image we have gathered of our own future. Even if it were granted that Hegel had the better part of the argument, even if it were true that his state could promulgate and assert a better justice than our own, we would still see no literal possibility of restoring these institutions or justifying them.

In weaker form, the question, then, is this: did Hegel, in his time and with his capacities of historical comprehension, theorize a plausible neutral state for which we could find functional equivalents today, or indeed in any time when state power, though frequently despised, seems to approximate a seamless web with so many other pursuits? Obviously the map that we have drawn here has changed. The "syntagma" is not the same. Plausibly, it could be argued that the Hegelian state was benign and productive of freedom because it conformed individual and group talents in a common undertaking, while thrusting back the interferences of the supernatural. Today, in the West, the arguments for and against individualism and the righteous self-sufficiency of the moral monad are at least as acute as in Hegel's own time, owing to the increased material possibilities for surrounding the self with an armature of basic literacy and skills, opportunity, and acquisitive curiosity and desire. On the other hand, we rarely view organized religion (even Catholicism) as a threat, although it would seem that certain governments of the People's Republics do. We intermittently regard explosions of individual conscience as menaces to civic cohesion, although we are more apt, in the inheritance of liberalism, to see some of them as breaches toward better social arrangements. On the whole, we find it despicable that persons should not be able to act "in any

way that the laws allow"; and any notion of serious sumptuary laws is a quaint fantasy. Our own "neutral state" exists at two levels. We perceive politics as the practice of interest-group competition, but retain a certain social faith in the idea that interests will counteract each other, *grosso modo*, when they meet in the political arena. Also, our state is expected to balance between the insurance of public order and the protection of the skill and guile of particular interests. Though it may be, in this process, that we have sacrificed the "sense of the state," it is widely felt, in the interest of human freedom, that this is "a world well lost." But we should at least suspend judgment on these things: both our political science and our political practice have produced some depressing results.

Let us return here to the question of "archaeology." Granting that Hegel attempted to use his wisdom and method to deploy a state suited to history, function, and logic, should we identify this state as a kind of ideal (as Hegel suggests, by introducing the comparison with Plato in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right*) or should we regard it as a philosophically veiled effort to justify a balance of social forces existing in his own time? Are these two interpretations necessarily anomalous?

Despite the fact that Hegel saw in Prussia the potential of a neutral state, which, above private conflicts, could arrange pluralism through dominant institutions such as a monarchy and an impartial bureaucracy, it is in France that the combat of these principles was actually played out during the reign of Louis XVIII (1814; 1815-1824).

Louis XVIII was an Hegelian monarch, *par excellence*, in the sense of function if not that of majesty. The corpulent and aging Comte de Provence was endowed neither with keen intellectual vigor nor with charisma in his arduous role as the first post-Revolutionary Bourbon. His heroism was nugatory; yet he had a certain grasp of the *bonne mesure* needed to facilitate France's recovery from her dramatic imperial adventures and final chastisement. Beseiged by a re-

stored and despised nobility bent on revenge and nostalgia, Louis XVIII persevered, not grandly, not generously, but with tentative acumen. His powers were defined by the so-called *Charte Constitutionnelle* of 4 June 1814, technically a constitutional grant of privilege by the hereditary monarch to the French people (thus far more retrograde in symbolism and rights than the Constitution of 1791), but variously interpreted by the truncated spectrum of political forces in play. It stated, notably:

It has been our duty (*nous avons dû*) to appreciate, following the example of the kings before us, the ever-growing results of progress and enlightenment, the new social relations created by progress, the intellectual movement of the people for the past half-century, and the drastic changes that have come about: we have recognized that the wish of our subjects for a constitution was the expression of a real need. . . .<sup>89</sup>

One of Louis XVIII's unofficial advisors was the *doctrinaire* Royer-Collard, himself a philosopher of sorts. Royer-Collard left no extended treatise of political science—his view of politics must be culled from his parliamentary speeches and the ideas attributed to him by memoirists and biographers—but the compilation of his theory of politics has an almost Hegelian ring. Political historiography has tended to label Royer-Collard a species of timid liberal. Certainly he was not an *ultra*. But, as in the case of Hegel, the label is not especially enlightening.

Like Hegel, Royer-Collard announced "a lively opposition to the theocratic principle which threatens both religion and society. Today's theocracy," he went on, "is less religious than political; it is part of the global system of reaction that is carrying us away."<sup>90</sup> Similarly, too, Royer-

<sup>89</sup> L. Duguit, H. Monnier, R. Bonnard, *Les Constitutions et les principales lois politiques de la France depuis 1789*, 7th ed. (Paris, 1952), p. 168.

<sup>90</sup> *Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860* (Paris, 1899), XLIV, 579.



Collard interpreted the French constitutional monarchy as "a mixed monarchy in which several powers compete with the royal power."<sup>91</sup> In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel had written of "the necessity for a division of powers . . . the guarantee of public freedom."<sup>92</sup> However, for Hegel, these powers should not be a "counterpoise," but a "living unity" in which "particular activities and agencies . . . constitute the sovereignty of the state."<sup>93</sup> Royer-Collard admittedly had a more mechanical view of the division of powers than Hegel, and, consequently, a more "negative" or liberal view of the state. But when the French parliamentary statesman opined on the function of the monarchy his views were close to Hegel's: "The constitutional king (*roi de la Charte*) maintains a striking predominance among the powers surrounding him. He alone represents the moral unity of society; he alone acts and commands, he alone is the author of the law and he exclusively initiates it."<sup>94</sup> This recalls Hegel's assertion that the monarch "reabsorbs all particularity into its single self, cuts short the weighing of pros and cons . . . and by saying 'I will' makes its decision and so inaugurates all activity and actuality."<sup>95</sup>

Hegel and Royer-Collard shared a voluntaristic notion of state power and legitimacy, associated with historical rationality. Both rejected the democratic or Jacobin idea that a political organ of sovereignty could be a mere aggregate of individual wills or any representative body to which the content of those wills could be assigned. "When we hear speakers on the constitution expatiating about the 'people'—this unorganized collection," Hegel asserts, "we know from the start that we have nothing to expect but generalities and perverse declarations."<sup>96</sup> Royer-Collard concurred:

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, XVI, 292.

<sup>92</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 272A, p. 175.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* and para. 278, p. 179.

<sup>94</sup> *Archives parlementaires*, XVI, 292.

<sup>95</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 279A, p. 181.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 303A, p. 198.

"The difference between the sovereignty of the people and the constituted sovereignty of free governments is that in the first there are only persons and wills, while in the second there are only rights and interests—the individualities vanish and all is raised from the particular to the general."<sup>97</sup> Royer-Collard's corporatist theory (or theory of the "representation of interests") was not the same as Hegel's, owing to differing traditions and circumstances; but both attributed an objective role in politics to the middle classes (Hegel *via* the bureaucracy; Royer-Collard *via* the censitarian Chamber of Deputies). "Centuries have prepared [for this theory], the revolution has announced it," said Royer-Collard. "The new [that is, vital] interests belong to this class."<sup>98</sup> Sometimes Royer-Collard employs the new term in the singular; sometimes in the plural, as "classes moyennes." As is well known, he ideologically attaches their (universal) viewpoint to the metaphysical construct of the "sovereignty of reason" which he opposes to "popular" (that is, Jacobin) sovereignty. Hegel, too, praised the middle class, "in which the consciousness of right and the developed intelligence of the mass of the people is found."<sup>99</sup>

Royer-Collard was not, like Hegel, a philosophical genius who built a theory of ethics, law, and politics as a corollary to his interpretation of the world. Nonetheless, their political doctrines are remarkably similar. If this is so, at least three models of explanation can be given. The first of these would be that both Royer-Collard and Hegel attempted to construct an ideology on behalf of a narrow middle class and to see the state in its image of dominance. The second is that, despite their praise of the wisdom and capacity of the middle class, they saw beyond a mere class-state to a balanced and harmonized state of hierarchies and interests. The third is that their construct of state and government provided, on a far broader scale, for "neutrality" and for the

<sup>97</sup> *Archives parlementaires*, LXX, 360.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIII, 344.

<sup>99</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 297, p. 193.

synthesis of freedom and cohesion. Allowing for the difference between Royer-Collard's French and Hegel's Germans, the choice is this: either an ideological middle-class regime; or the theorization of a temporary balance; or a stronger theory of functional "neutrality" in which the social components might change.

The first of these images has a certain advocacy. Neither Hegel nor Royer-Collard had much love for the traditional aristocracy; both accepted the Revolution, but both wanted to hone off its sharp populist edges by combining the conduct of the state with the ideals of "talent," "education," and "reason." For many of today's cultural diagnosticians—especially as affected by Marxism—Hegel's philosophy (and, by extrapolation, Royer-Collard's political synthesis) represents the apex of bourgeois thought, its "most ample philosophical totalization."<sup>100</sup> Yet, on the factual plane, a serious problem arises. The collaboration between monarch and middle classes explicit in the theories of both Hegel and Royer-Collard looks backward to Richelieu more than forward to Restoration, even if "constitutional government" has been added. Neither Hegel, who planted his "tree of liberty" at Tübingen, nor Royer-Collard, who had sat in a Thermidorian assembly, was dense enough, though, to opt for a pre-Revolutionary solution. Nor was their praise of the middle classes a direct forewarning of the political theory of "bourgeois society," which implied the supremacy of a special economic society over the state.

The second image is more persuasive. According to this image, both Hegel and Royer-Collard found themselves in a political matrix of transformation. The new (post-Napoleonic) bourgeoisie was not the same as the old. The pretensions and *mode de vie* of the nobility had been jolted, even overturned. The collaboration or convergence of the elements of society in the state's business was in a position

<sup>100</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *In Search of a Method*, tr. H. Barnes (New York, 1963), p. 8.



of flux or adjustment. The need was to constitutionalize these arrangements in a productive mixture of continuity and originality, preserving venerability where it could be afforded, acknowledging transformation where it bore the facts of reason and necessity. Moderate thinkers were concerned to consolidate a society in which the old and new could form one fabric, one piece. As Madame de Staël put it: "The color of the past must melt into the present."<sup>101</sup> This meant a domestication of the aristocracy, and an easy commerce between its most gifted members and those of the educated bourgeoisie, but based on the bourgeois principle of merit, not the noble principle of blood (compare the collaboration of men like the Duc de Richelieu and Decazes in the Restoration). It meant also a monarchical apex of political society whose "I will" could phase out residual complications of the Ancien Régime (including the *syntagma* politics-religion-faction), while anticipating the treatment of new conflicts of interest.

The most succinct example of this interpretation is by Laski. It is a supple version of that side of the Marxist theory of the state which grants an autonomy to the state in periods of social deadlock:

Royer-Collard came to importance in public life at a time when two antithetic systems of political organization stood face to face. He was able to understand that neither was of itself strong enough to triumph. He was quick to perceive that unlimited victory of either would be in no sense an unmitigated benefit. He opposed the theory of the royalists because it made the state the privileged possession of a single interest. He opposed the theory of democracy because, as he conceived, France was not ready to accept pretensions alien to what had thus far been the historic system of her institutions. But in each he per-

<sup>101</sup> Germaine de Staël, *Considérations sur la Révolution française* (Paris, 1962), II, 265.

ceived a truth which might, in combination, work for good.<sup>102</sup>

There is a plausibility and generosity in Laski's assessment of Royer-Collard's task (reduced to nought in 1828–1830),<sup>103</sup> for the passage plainly asserts that there are not only socially conditioned moments of state supremacy permitted by a relative equivalence of class forces (here the restored *cum* imperial aristocracy and the financial bourgeoisie), but that, independent of this, there are statesmen who see the need of theorizing and implementing the primacy of the state for more general interests. To admit such a vocation is to admit not only a higher political discernment, but to allow for political executants who are not, *eo ipso*, class-oriented, and it is to raise the question of how they might be trained or obtained, and what sort of constitutional system and political ethic might bring them to the fore.

This is very close to what Hegel seems to mean when he draws the distinction between “hommes d'état” and “hommes à principes” (ideologues). The latter are created on waves of political enthusiasm. As for the former, “the knowledge, experience, and business routine of *hommes d'état* cannot be so easily procured.”<sup>104</sup> Historical sensitivity, humanistic *Bildung*, rootedness in the continuity of society, administrative effectiveness, and probity are the conditions for maintaining a state that is above the partiality of its parts. But most of modern doctrine sees this as an illusion. It sees “society” as vigorous (vicious or virtuous) and the state as a “spook” that responds mechanically—or lamely—to the self-interested powers of society.

This discussion leads us briefly to consider the third image, an image hideously tarnished by most political theory since Hegel (except possibly that of the British idealists,

<sup>102</sup> Harold Laski, *Authority in the Modern State* (New York, 1919), p. 319.

<sup>103</sup> For Hegel's view, see *Philosophy of History*, pp. 451 ff.

<sup>104</sup> “English Reform Bill,” pp. 325–326.

who have their own conceptual and "ideological" troubles). That image recommends the continuing search for a state that is neither religion on earth, nor the elastic plaything of factions, nor the captive of a fictive ideology that defeats the human experiment. Hegel was, I think, the last great proponent of such a theory. Much that has passed in subsequent event—industrial society, total war, propagandistic mobilization of large populations by governments or anti-governments—blurs Hegel's institutional solutions, even if the broader purpose that they were intended to achieve remains tempting. Even apologists for Hegel's greatness are inclined to concede the insularity of the *Philosophy of Right*. Scarcely ten years after Hegel had delivered his comprehensive judgment on the whole sphere of "practical reason," successors had arisen to unmask that "theology." Idealists, *nouvel ordre*, accused him of Machiavellian leanings, including a glorification of war and carnage; populists accused him of neofeudalism. Marxists who took their departures from his method and liberals who denounced it combined to impugn Hegel's notion of the state, even while state power, within both their spheres, was growing. Since this was either inexplicable or catastrophic, neither had any notion of the humanization of the state.

As long as there is a political science dedicated to organizing men in better common relations, the question of the state must remain open. This is despite a long tradition that sees collective purpose and power as a hindrance to the free personality, and despite another tradition that sees it as necessary as a control upon man's ineradicable evil. The mission here is not to make the state appear virtuous, but merely to present it as a reality and not a fiction, and to draw attention to Hegel's effort to rationalize that reality. A further "archaeological" necessity will be a succeeding essay showing how Hegel's theory of the "neutral state" broke down. The theories and lessons of Hegel's own time, as well as the comparison of his texts with those of Royer-Collard, can only be suggestive. I have singled out for spe-



cial observation the changes of syntagmatic relationship between the notion of the state and other terms—such as “church,” “society,” “individual,” “class,” “interest,” and the like. These relations define the nature and common understanding of the state under particular conditions. There is a continuing task of political science to define the state, a comprehensive organ of justice and the common life, facilitating higher purposes, in this way. Hegel did not close the problem. But we can profitably return to it, behind the backs of his most fashionable critics.

---

## THE GRAVEDIGGERS OF THE "NEUTRAL STATE"

MODERN intellectual history gives Hegel pride of place because of his power as a cultural summarizer and benchmark. It is obliged to do this, moreover, because so many other thinkers of weight—let us mention only Kierkegaard, Croce, and Lukács—have held a continuing dialogue with Hegel. Yet Hegel's theory of the state seems an embarrassing contraband. Praised for his deft psychological and sociological insights and for his logical daring, Hegel has rarely gotten high marks for his institutional proposals. Liberalism dallied with certain Hegelian notions at the peril of its Benthamite soul; reaction froze Hegel into weird shapes estranged from his meaning; Marxism romped with him on illicit dialectical adventures.

Yet if the theory of the state declined, the same cannot be said for the hungry Leviathan that it was supposed to clarify. Thus a sensitive reconsideration of Hegel's political theory, liberated from the worst uses and abuses, cannot be mere fantasy in our own time. The state has neither vanished nor been diminished, as considerable thinkers such as Fichte, Humboldt, J. S. Mill, and Lenin had prophesied. Despite the current howl against the state in America and Western Europe, it expands its power. The Communist East, far from "withering it away," has been learning to live with it in its most Byzantine and disagreeable forms. Scores of Third World countries are attempting to build it. Neither internal rifts, nor alliances of convenience, nor multinational enterprises have sounded its tocsin. There would seem to be ample empirical justification, then, for a more searching look at Hegel's theory and what happened to it.

I doubt that this theory can begin to be useful for contemporary problems unless (1) we can understand it in its own context, especially in what I previously called its "syntagmatic relationships," and (2) we have a firm grasp of its immediate aftermath, or the conditions of its dissolution. I have already dealt with the first point. Here I shall be concerned, though only cursorily and suggestively, with the aftermath. There is no pretense of making an inquiry into the doctrine and practice of modern states, a task beyond my knowledge and stamina.

In the following analysis I shall confine my remarks to certain German and French thinkers who came in Hegel's immediate wake. Thus my conclusion will not bear directly on any political ideas developed beyond this orbit, particularly in the English-speaking countries.

Hegel's state was never, and in no way, fulfilled, as history makes clear. The institutions he proposed and juxtaposed were never bent to their intended purposes. Moreover, the new civilization of "civil society," of industry and labor, surpassed the guidance that Hegelian theory could provide. In verses more poignant than elegant, the American Philip Freneau was already writing, in the adopted tones of the English archaists:

No solitude's attracting power,  
No leisure of the noonday hour,  
No shaded stream, no quiet grove  
Can this fantastic century move.<sup>1</sup>

Closer to home, the model of Prussia failed. Although the administrative elite that emerged from the Stein-Hardenberg reforms "reached the zenith of its historic career during the generation from 1815 to 1848," the Crown was plagued by timidity and obscurantism, the landed aristocracy kept its preeminence, and corporate life was muzzled in a "happy tranquillity of absolutism."<sup>2</sup> Persons sympa-

<sup>1</sup> Philip Freneau, "To an Author."

<sup>2</sup> Hans Rosenberg, *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy, and Autocracy: The Prussian Experience, 1660-1815* (Boston, 1966), pp. 227-228.



thetic to the Hegelian doctrine of the state were driven from office and from their university chairs within a decade of the death of the master. A lengthy accumulated legend tells us that Germany floundered toward moral disaster either in spite of or because of Hegel. If in spite of Hegel, we are invited to discover that his views were subversive, revolutionary, incipiently socialist. If because of him, we are told that his doctrines were used to restrain or retard the emergence of healthy and competitive social forces, first in Prussia and later in Wilhelmine Germany. Both interpretations are misguided. Hegel is no more responsible for Germany's basic misfortune and evil than St. Thomas Aquinas is responsible for today's debates on abortion or the sale of French war planes to Libya. The function of political philosophy is not to "contribute" to a muddy cascade of subsequent political acts; it is to clarify. Thus, Rousseau clarified the French Revolution, not simply by giving slogans to the Jacobins, but also because of the significant distance between his doctrines and those of, say, Sieyès or Saint-Just; he did not "make" it any more than it was made by Calonne or Raynal or Dr. Guillotin.

A brilliant book by Henri Michel at the end of the last century asserts of Hegel that "perhaps more effectively than any other thinker of our century, he worked to increase the power of the state."<sup>3</sup> Strictly speaking, this is false: the state waxed, for reasons of its own, without need of any push from a largely ignored Hegel. And when Michel asserts that "Hegel is . . . the precursor of all doctrines . . . which undermined the notion, if not the feeling, of individual rights,"<sup>4</sup> he deserves to be sent back to the texts, for we have only to open the *Philosophy of Right* to find that Hegel believed in a balancing of rights between the state and persons.<sup>5</sup> Similar generalizations have made Plato the father of modern communism or modern technocracy.

<sup>3</sup> Henri Michel, *L'idée de l'état* (Paris, 1896), p. 155.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, tr. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), para. 36, p. 37; and para. 261, p. 161.

Despite the failure of Hegel's state to be realized, and in view of arguments that distort his complicity in what happened later, it is useful to return to his period to pick up the traces. The core of the problem, as I have suggested, exists in the syntagma "state . . . religion" and in the relationship of other secondary concepts such as "individual," "civil society," and so on, to this basic structure. This is very hard for us to grasp today, because most of us are not concerned with religion except as an intimate and personal force. The great spell that Kierkegaard weaves over us is in his extraordinary reduction of God to a nonpolitical being. The extraordinary charge that we receive from the writings of Marx is connected with his perception that society is utterly godless and man-made; that, socially speaking, religion is an "opium" that fatuously consoles us for an unjust world that *we* can aspire to remake in the image of man's justice. In the aftermath of World War II, when American greenhorn scholars began to spin out endless tomes on the political systems of non-Western societies, their most glaring failure was to neglect the public aspect of religion (which would have been obvious to a Victorian); nothing in their comfortably agnostic educations had ever prepared them to conceive it. But the problem of faith and the relationship between the positive institutions of faith and other social institutions will not die, either in traditional or secularized systems. The problem is extremely complex, and it lies at the base of our discussion.

"The significance of the dual nature [of the government of believers and the mystical unity of their society]," writes Sheldon Wolin, "is that it expresses the quandary of most modern societies. Moreover, this similarity between the Church and modern political societies is not fortuitous. In both instances the force fusing the members into a solidary whole has been a mystical, non-rational one."<sup>6</sup> The writer here expresses the incorporation of both a spiritual and a practical soul into the conduct of public secular affairs—

<sup>6</sup> Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision* (Boston, 1960), p. 131.

"mystique" and "politique" remain uneasy partners despite the fateful march of Max Weber's "disenchantment." But it is either too little or too much to say that the force of religious community, rendered at last to Caesar, bifurcates the options and limits of this world. For the secularization process incorporates several moments: (1) the revision by which other-worldly values are made immanent in the social aspirations of the city of man; (2) as a corollary, the search by sophisticates and average persons alike for surrogates of divine majesty, at a moment when the heavens are rolled back out of sight like the scenery in a Rameau opera; (3) the imbeddedness of residual supernatural faith in private conscience and in voluntary associations after its disappearance from the public arena of the state; (4) the functional relocation of portions of both *regnum* and *sacerdotium* in other institutions, in aspects of a "society" that simply is, without sanction of a willed creation; (5) the loss of faith itself. Thus we are not simply faced with a "civil religion" or with the loss or lack of religion. The situation is far more confusing.

Hegel's state was, among other things, a vast attempt to compare and compass the terms of this relationship. He knew that the procedures of "modern freedom" had separated *polis* and *ecclesia*,<sup>7</sup> and that therefore both terms, as traditionally understood, were inexact. Their reunion would need to be a partnership of faith and knowledge (see *Glauben und Wissen*, 1802), but an unequal partnership in favor of knowledge. Hegel did not see the world with the eyes of a positivist descendancy, but from a public position. In the important paragraph 270A of the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel gives us the triad "science . . . faith . . . state." As opposed to the modern doctrine of positivism, he does not envisage a Comtean progress (endorsed also by pseudo-Hegelians such as Proudhon) in which science supplants religion, using the state as a means to its end but ultimately

<sup>7</sup> The *ecclesia*, before being denominated a "church," was of course the general assembly of the Athenian *polis*.



abolishing the state, too, as a kind of metaphysical shadow, through education and engineering. More soberly, Hegel postulated the endurance of the state as a superior and necessary organ mediating between the cognitive and spiritual resources of society: "The church bases [its] claim on the wide ground that the whole domain of mind (*Geist*) is its property. But science and all types of knowledge also have a footing in that domain and, like a church, they build themselves into a whole with a guiding principle of its own, and, with even better justification, may regard themselves as occupying the position which the church claims."<sup>8</sup> But science is no more than religion an end in itself, as institutionally organized. In Hegel's view, the state, no longer "a mere mundane rule of force, caprice, and passion," resides above both a science which sees only to phenomena and a church which, as we now say, "aggregates the interests" of subjective conviction. In brief, "the state is that which knows."<sup>9</sup> It does not "know" the Pythagorean theorem or Boyle's law; neither does it "know" the responses of the catechism or how the altar should be dressed during Advent: what it knows is how to compose man's spiritual strivings and intellectual curiosity (each of these being elements of vast power) in a stable social whole.

As the passage above shows, Hegel conceived that if science took on the prerogatives of a church, it could scarcely fail to make modern man worship its infallibility. He did not wish this outcome. In his own age, religious "truth" was an obsolete, though still powerful, tyrant; while science, as Rousseau had declared, was capable of organizing its own fanaticism.<sup>10</sup> Neither could create a political community, much less justify it philosophically. Above them both was a kind of knowledge that related the common life of man to true wisdom and made cooperative civilization possible.

<sup>8</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 270A, p. 170.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Confessions*, IX, in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. B. Gagnebin and M. Raymond (Paris, 1959- ), I, 435.

No doubt Hegel's view of the state was closely connected to his experience and to a kind of mental and professional chauvinism. He, too, had been a German functionary. But he was also a potent philosopher, more deeply drenched in the history of culture than any other. And he had an uncommonly great synthesizing mind. He had arrogantly built his own philosophy as a single architectural triumph, while acknowledging that it rose on previous foundations. As opposed to Descartes's *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Hegel's *Phenomenology* was the bullying of a mind neglectful of doubting, but ever reinforced by the transformations of all it was compelled to doubt. Hegel was the furthest thing from a discursive intellectual gadfly. His inconsistencies are to be attributed to the failure of the human mind to see with the vision of God—not to any lack of premeditated design or failure of courage. This meant, among other things, that his political theory was a species of his metaphysics and that Hegel was striving for ultimate political truth. "Beware all who enter here," a liberal might say—truth is plural, inductive, infinitely testable. Hegel said that the truth is one, although it unfolds in incredibly multiple, though organized, articulations. He dares us to grasp this fact, and to grasp it rationally.

Much scorned in the aftermath, this intimate linkage between the knowledge of knowledge and the knowledge of its specific human manifestations—which is indeed a theology of a special sort—was immediately grasped by Hegel's intellectual followers and critics. As a recent editor writes: "Neither Feuerbach nor, following him, Marx doubted that Hegel's philosophy was essentially theological in character, and that what Hegel called the Absolute was what the ordinary man calls God."<sup>11</sup> I would modify this assertion in the sense that Charles Taylor has ably suggested in his comprehensive recent work on Hegel.<sup>12</sup> Hegel's philosophy is

<sup>11</sup> Joseph O'Malley, Introduction to Karl Marx's *Critique of Hegel's "Philosophy of Right"* (Cambridge, 1970), pp. xxx–xxxi.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge, 1975), pp. 88 ff.

essentially theological in character, but his conception of the Absolute is not simply God; rather it is the highest mode of man's approach to a divinity which both accompanies him and is within him, and the creative tension of this dialectic. No matter: the point is well made. Hegel is thus a theocrat, but no ordinary one. He did not develop his political theory as a hot flash of the Restoration, but as the result of a personal evolution that has its visible roots in the Jena period of 1799–1806.

There are two interpretations of the attack on Hegel's resolution of philosophy, state, and religion which some of his successors took. Both are true, but the second is, I think, the more comprehensive. The first, which in the wake of Marx and of clues supplied by Hegel himself (for instance, his equation of the "tranquil theory" of Kant with the events of the French Revolution),<sup>13</sup> avers that there is a pronounced cultural lag: the Germans merely "think" but the French "act." Moreover, the German *Aufklärung* was mainly confined to slenderizing faith to rational proportions, whereas the French were engaged in a frontal attack on religion which rebounded on all the other institutions of the Ancien Régime. This theory reaches its apogee in the onslaught by Marx and Engels on their fellow "progressives" in *The Holy Family*. According to this view, the religious revolution in Germany was a pseudo-revolution, the French Revolution (though paradigmatic) was merely political, while the great and final revolution (perhaps to strike fire in Germany, partly because of its philosophical tinder) will be *social*. This notion of revolutions parallels the positivist sequence of *religious-metaphysical-scientific*, and it is wrapped around interpretations of the German "lag" in reaching modernity, a lag complicated by the "national question." According to Marx and Engels, the Germans are retrograde but potentially volatile and a vanguard in the revolutionary continuum. The German working class is the inheritor not only of French deeds but of "philosophy."

<sup>13</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, Introduction, p. 22.



It is amply documented that the Germans went for "thoughts" rather than "deeds," provided that the theory of "modernizing revolutions" is plausible. This notion, often accepted by the Germans themselves, receives scholarly approval in our own times, with special opprobrium placed on the primacy of Prussian "administration" and the social fragility of Prussian "politics" (cf. Ralf Dahrendorf, Barrington Moore, and others). Yet, without denying this centerpiece interpretation of "unbalanced modernization," I believe it would be more correct to acknowledge unfathomed depths of clarification in the Hegelian "state . . . religion" syntagma which are only now being harvested, as our scholars abandon older assumptions of positivism and "cosmic Whiggery" that depended on the "progress . . . rationality . . . secularization" syntagma.

The restless epigoni following in Hegel's wake, and using his methods to unblock his system and carry it forward, certainly believed that they were contributing to demystification and a widened enlightenment. Cieszkowski is an obvious example, in his fascinating attempt to unfreeze Hegelian world history. Most of these vagrant pupils even felicitated Hegel for disenchanting the world process. But, here again, it is by a complex strategy that they sought to demystify and humanize their culture.

In the first place, as Marx and Engels noted, the Young Hegelians, aping the radical *Aufklärer* of the previous century, did strike at religion rather than at the basic political issues of secular power and domination, moving in a *Geisterwelt* rather than a real world. In part this was through an intellectual temerity well compromised by public timidity. It was also influenced by the political disunity of German culture, by authoritarian repressions of political action, and by the awkward development of German liberalism and its social supports. But secondly, there remained more than a trace of the syntagma "state . . . religion" in the minds of these *café* revolutionaries, accounting for the more than antiquarian fascination they stimulate in today's "style revo-

lutionaries." Finally, the generation following Hegel felt the necessity of striking, however aberrantly, at politics through religion. The irony is that Hegel's own strategy was to promote politics without destroying religion—halting consciously at the frontiers of substituting a demystified "religion of humanity" for the recondite but effective solidarity of the Christian faith. In order to destroy Hegel's shaky foundation of the syntagma "religion . . . politics," and with the paradoxical collaboration of reactionaries who found that solution hateful to their privileged ideology, the epigoni needed to subjugate religion to the social sciences and, infallibly, to destroy the harmony of the Hegelian state with a free-floating political community of the mind from which all control, all intrinsic wisdom, and all "enchantment" had fled. In so doing, they transplanted religious conviction from the public arena, making it servile to the forces and whims of "society," thinking in their *café* criticism to reform Lutherans, Calvinists, Catholics, Jews, and atheists, bureaucrats, Junkers, businessmen, and peasants into an unwilling *plenum* of "humanity."

Their scholarly intentions were commendable, and have been repeated many times since by gifted second-rate innovators. As Ruge put it in launching his *Hallische Jahrbücher*: "[our purpose is] to perceive the spirit, and also religion and the state, as they are and as they have become, not how they will be or ought to be."<sup>14</sup> But the Young Hegelians were not really in a position to do this. They used Hegel's philosophy for their private intellectual designs, believing collectively in two things: (1) that the progress of the spirit had outrun its objectification in Hegel's philosophy; and (2) that the famous supersession of religion by philosophy meant a supersession of speculative Christianity by anthropological humanism.<sup>15</sup> They were agreed on little else, especially politics; or, rather, they did not (until

<sup>14</sup> *Hallische Jahrbücher für deutsche Wissenschaft und Kunst* (1838), p. 1433. Cited by William J. Brazill, *The Young Hegelians* (New Haven, 1970), p. 92.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

Marx) see the intimate connection between their explosion of the "politics . . . religion" syntagma and a related (so-called Feuerbachian) inversion of the "state . . . society" syntagma. Liberalism, arduously and ambiguously, had blazed a constant path toward the separation of state and religious conscience and state and society, one whose glory, though lately fallen upon contradictions, nevertheless has had its independent record to defend. The Young Hegelians knew little or nothing of the toil and sweat of liberalism—except from books—but they were speculatively innoculated against the "moral seasickness" of their own surroundings.

Before taking up Marx, we can briefly pass some of these phenomena in review. Feuerbach, whose "Vorläufige Thesen" were a spearhead for the substitution of religious anthropology for theology, showed little interest in politics as such. Strauss, whose *Life of Jesus* opened up generations of radical perspectives on the status and truth of the Christian faith, was less than sanguine about events in the public sphere as revolution threatened: "A nature such as mine was happier under the old police state, when at least order reigned in the streets. . . . In society one could speak of literature and art . . . but this is no longer possible."<sup>16</sup>

Ruge is the most interesting case, for here was a man who seized Hegel's religious ambivalence in its boldest form, insisting on the replacement of Christianity by humanism, yet declaring also that this humanism be propagated democratically. This mission led Ruge across the breach from speculation to political activism. The divinity of humanity had to be accompanied by the rights of humanity—that was the mission of the present age, which Ruge expressed in tones of conciliation: "This is the spirit of the present, for it affirms itself in its movement; it is the free spirit, for it affirms its power in external events, it conquers the onrush of the enemy that threatens to subject it; its freedom is feeling and pleasure, the knowledge of its

<sup>16</sup> D. Strauss to Vischer, 13 April 1848. Cited *ibid.*, p. 121.



presence, that is of its power and triumph."<sup>17</sup> Ruge went beyond the Hegelian syntagma of "state . . . religion," drawing the conclusion that the spirit of the times demanded a credo of humanity accessible to all. But he did not lay the final blow upon the Hegelian state; his abuse of Hegel's settlement was a halfway house. For, although in 1838 he has some fairly sizzling things to say about Prussian practices, he still believes in the supremacy of the state as Hegel left it. This will not be in terms of "the theoretical categories of mechanical and organic states, or of bureaucracies and civil service states." But it will be the fulfillment of "objective spirit displayed in its actuality, neither a machine nor an organism, but a conscious and ethical entity (*ein Bewusstes, ein Sittliches*)."<sup>18</sup> Moreover, "the ethical realm (*Reich der Sittlichkeit*) has been consummated with admirable reality in Prussia; nowhere will one find a more accomplished sense of rights and duties than among us. . . ."<sup>19</sup> Why? Precisely because Prussia had nurtured and promoted Hegelian philosophy, sanctioned the publication of Hegel's works and posthumous lectures, and allowed his successors to preach and propagate. Ruge challenges Prussia: will you now muzzle this glorious heritage?<sup>19</sup> Independently of Prussian reactionary designs, we can observe the movement of neo-Hegelian faith verging on new expectations from the state, implying an unbalancing of Hegel's prudent structure, whose ingredients Marx will shortly exalt, suppress, or redefine in a new and potent syntagma.

Marx's undertaking can be followed very closely in his path-breaking *Critique of the Philosophy of Right*, where, employing Feuerbach's "transformative method" he inverts the relationship of state and citizens (society), just as Feuerbach had done with God and man. The first step of this criticism is to show that, at best, Hegel's propositions are logical, not actual: "Hegel's true interest is not the phi-

<sup>17</sup> Arnold Ruge, *Preussen und die Reaction: Zur Geschichte unserer Zeit* (Leipzig, 1838), p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

losophy of right but logic. The philosophical task is not the embodiment of thought in determinate political realities, but in the evaporation of these realities in abstract thought."<sup>20</sup> Conforming to this idea, the obvious target is the monarchy. Hegel had "subjectified the state in a mystical way." But "subjectivity is a characteristic of subjects and personality a characteristic of the person. . . . The subject [monarch] then appears to be a self-incarnation of sovereignty, which is nothing but the objectified spirit of the state's subjects [who are really sovereign]."<sup>21</sup> Consequently, for Marx, "democracy is the truth of monarchy, monarchy is not the truth of democracy. Monarchy is necessarily democracy in contradiction with itself, whereas the monarchical moment [sovereignty] is in no contradiction within democracy. . . . Democracy is *human existence*, while in the other political forms man has only legal existence."<sup>22</sup> As for that other fundamental pillar of the Hegelian state, the bureaucracy of a "universal class," "most of the paragraphs [of the *Philosophy of Right*] could be found verbatim in the Prussian *Landrecht*."<sup>23</sup> Hegel had affirmed that the bureaucracy found its reservoir of talent in the local corporations and that the process of recruitment raised the special-interest mentality to universality through asceticism and training. But Marx argues that their contradiction is complete: "The Corporation is civil society's attempt to become a state; but the bureaucracy is the state which has really made itself into civil society."<sup>24</sup> We should notice the religious imagery which is at once a residue and an irony of the old syntagma: "The bureaucrats are the Jesuits and theologians of the state. The bureaucracy is *la république prêtre*. . . . The bureaucracy has the being of the state, the spiritual being of society, in its possession; it is its private property. The general spirit of the bureaucracy is the secret, the mystery, preserved inwardly by means of the

<sup>20</sup> O'Malley, ed., Marx's *Critique*, p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 24.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 30.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

hierarchy and externally as a closed corporation."<sup>25</sup> Marx's argument is at the heart of much current debate, so we cannot call the issue merely academic. As Professor Miliband writes:

For Britain, Mr. Sisson [C. H. Sisson, *The Spirit of Administration*, 1959, p. 124] has argued that the task of the top civil servant, "like that of the Crown, is to maintain continuity" and that "his profession requires him to care more for the continuity of the realm than for the success of party." This is a very odd argument: for, very far from involving the kind of "neutrality" which Mr. Sisson proclaims as the distinguishing characteristic of the top administrator, it commits the latter to a very un-neutral attitude toward *policies* which, in his view, ensure "the continuity of the realm" and toward innovations which, in his view, do not, or appear to him to threaten it.<sup>26</sup>

The position one takes here depends on the degree of desire one has to see realms threatened. For realms often do innovate, stimulated by the political mechanisms and collective voices of dissatisfaction that surround them. They may not innovate successfully, and may be overthrown: but that is an empirical question. The theoretical question is whether realms or bureaucracies can become politically legitimated stabilizers independent of uncompromising partisanship. Hegel would answer that they must have precisely this role and practice in both the formal-legal and human-cultural spheres.

I cannot outline here all the clever Feuerbachian inversions in Marx's polemic: it is one of the truly witty pieces of political theory. But the major point has been made. Accompanied by a great fund of scorn and indignation, Marx's work achieves the syntagmatic breach with Hegel's attempted reconciliation of religion and politics by making

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 47.

<sup>26</sup> Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (London, 1969), p. 122.



the first the worldly servant of the second, while reducing the state to an illusory manifestation of real social power. This transformation is accomplished when, with both sophistication and simplification, Marx turns to the relation between state and civil society.<sup>27</sup> Here, he misreads Hegel unjustly, for he promotes the fiction that Hegel saw these concepts "as two actually different spheres, firmly opposed to one another"<sup>28</sup>—an interpretation that has been the source of much mischief. Marx acutely detects Hegel's hesitation between "estate" and "class" as a clue of interpretation, but his vivid writing does not, on occasion, protect him from becoming more metaphysical than Hegel. The offense to Hegel is perhaps justified: it leads Marx on to his discovery of the contradictions of private property and of modern political and social relations, matters productive of that new syntagma that would shake the world.

Marx is still here working within the notion of the state, which he concludes will be necessarily democratic and—the word is just falling from his lips—proletarian. His brilliant writing, especially in the published companion piece "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*," is eminently quotable and prophetic of his historical work: "The struggle against the political present in Germany is the struggle against the past of the modern nations, who are still continually troubled by the reminiscences of the past. It is instructive for them to see the *ancien régime*, which experienced its moment of tragedy in their history, play its comedy as a German ghost."<sup>29</sup> The beginning of a metaphor of world-historical impact. Consider also: "The modern *ancien régime* is nothing but the humbug of a world order whose real heroes are dead. History is thorough, and passes through many phases when it conveys an

<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, the clarity of the transformation is occluded by the fact that Marx offers no commentary on paragraph 270A of the *Philosophy of Right*. He says he will come back to it, but never does. *Critique*, p. 15.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

old form to the grave."<sup>30</sup> Socrates and Jesus were not scribes; can we resist the inventor of a new world order who writes so well?

For all their virtuosity, Marx's brilliant criticisms, shortly to be developed into a world-historical doctrine, do not permanently abolish Hegel or his vision of a "neutral state." History has left us, or provided us, with states and bureaucracies in circumstances that make us reluctant to abolish them. In the combat of philosophies, Marx and Hegel are *partie nulle*. Marxism has conquered vast territories and peoples, but it has no consistent means of facing the problem of freedom and order. Prussia is past; Russia, China, and Cuba remain. But the problem also remains.

One thing that Marx did was to complete the shattering of the Hegelian state as an entity which gathered into its completeness a fullness of faith and worldly activity (material and spiritual values). Since Hegel had certainly not solved this problem, Marx determined to go beyond him. But Marxism, in its practice, forsook the depth of cultural understanding that Hegel had accumulated. Liberalism, in its most superficial moments, had wanted to liberate man for the widest practice of his willful caprice consistent with the endurance of a society. Marxism, in its most generous manifestations, despised the result to which this led: Mahagonny. It wished to combine men in a common society of sharing and respect, but it cared scarcely for man's heritage, which could be belittled as "aristocratic" or "bourgeois." It sought its model explicitly in the dispossessed, who were distinguished by having no heritage to transmit. Hegel attempted the more difficult and unpopular operation of liberating men by binding them to their heritage, by reminding them that nothing valuable to civilization need be lost, that cultural duties accompanied civilized rights, and that freedom, to be meaningful, required the discipline of memory (*Erinnerung*). It was not Marx alone who shattered what I have called the Hegelian syntagma. Many minds,

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

many events, many processes did this—other traditions of thought, statecraft, and revolution. But in view of Hegel and his ideological aftermath there is justification for dwelling on Marx.

A single man, however great, does not inaugurate an entire intellectual process. But he may be decisively symptomatic or influential. And Marx was both. One of the main notions I have been tracing is the transformation of the problematic of religion and state (challenged by the Revolution, recaptured by the Restoration) to a problematic of state and society (with religion reduced to private proportions or else incorporated as a kind of social pressure group, desacralized in the context of modern politics like trade unions or the Boy Scouts). Intellectually (for in the words of Marx, "just as ancient peoples lived their past history in their imagination, in mythology, so we Germans have lived our future history in thought, in philosophy"),<sup>31</sup> this syntagmatic transfer was carried out in the Germany of the turn of the 1840s, even though the masses of people were little changed by the experience. The rediscovery of the German philosophical anguish of this decade is one of the remarkable facts of contemporary *histoire circonstancielle*.

That aside, it is amazing how intellectual currents flow. The syntagmatic redistribution of Hegelianism in Germany was nowhere better specified than in Marx's essay "On the Jewish Question" (1843), where he scathingly turned Bauer's plea for the absorption of the Jews into secular life to an attack on the Hegelian solution suggested in the previous essay. "Man," Marx writes, "emancipates himself *politically* from religion by expelling it from the sphere of public law to that of private law. Religion is no longer the spirit of the *state* [Hegel had written: 'in being related to religion (as a species of absolute truth) . . . state, laws, and duties all alike acquire for consciousness their supreme confirmation'],<sup>32</sup> in which man behaves, albeit in a specific and

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>32</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 270A, p. 166.



limited way and in a particular sphere, as a species-being, in community with other men. It has become the spirit of *civil society*, of the sphere of egoism and of the *bellum omnium contra omnes*. It is no longer the essence of *community*, but the essence of *differentiation*.”<sup>33</sup> Although Hegel applauded religious pluralism as a warrant that *Wissen* had supplanted *Glauben* as the politically integrating force in men's lives, he abhorred unlimited sectarianism. The young Marx achieved the removal of religion from its connection with the state by spreading it atomistically within liberal and subjective society. Marx imagined that religion would be dispersed in much the same way that other private interests are dispersed, and cease therefore to be troublesome to politics once the true interests of man as an individual had been reconciled with his public self. He was partly right in his belief that religion would take this (American) course, but he failed to conjure with its persisting power in the new order, within the interstices of civil society. He followed the Young Hegelians in believing that religion could be evaporated into an anthropological humanism, while going beyond them in his conviction that the political self-awareness of socialism would achieve that result. In any case, the passage cited above accomplishes intellectually the syntagmatic process by which the public status of religion is reduced temporarily to a private right, which will be eventually dissolved in the demystification of the true secular community. At this point a further complication in the assaulted syntagma is introduced, for the Hegelian structure can be interpreted to read “monarchy . . . religion . . . private property . . . bureaucracy.” The Marxist corrective reads “democracy . . . humanism . . . communism . . . proletariat.”

Our intellectual shorthand often reduces this complexity, *via* Feuerbach and Marx, to the primacy of “society” and the epiphenomenality of the “state.” Here the implications

<sup>33</sup> Karl Marx, “Bruno Bauer, ‘Die Judenfrage,’” in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, tr. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York, 1964), p. 15.

of the German syntagmatic transformation rejoin the liberalism of Locke's successors, reducing the "neutral state" to fictive powerlessness, because it is viewed either as a scaffolding for society or as a smokescreen for its vital competitions, or else as an autonomous Machiavellian entity grounded in its own power. Our archaeology has shown some of the roots of this reductionism, and has presented the germ of an argument that suggests that the "politics . . . society" formulation is simplistically misleading. A clue to the wider complexity can be obtained by tracing the cultural fate of religion and its institutional supports.

The thesis is, then, that momentarily the idea of a state, provided with effective balance, authority, unity, diversification, and "neutrality," appeared as the consummation of Hegel's thought about ethics, law, and politics. It had the intellectual advantage, moreover, of all Hegel's resources of cultural interpretation. It was not, as Marx contemptuously remarked, a comic rebirth of the Ancien Régime, nor, in conception, did it resemble later caricatures that were struck down by their own failings and by revolutionary discontent. It professed to solve the great contention between public solidarity and the caprice of private will and conscience, through a complex theory that sought to adjust the takeoff of the modern scientific and secular intellect to the traditional rootedness of the many, thus facilitating both the common interest and the ancestral mission of Western culture.

We might well call Hegel's state transitional—transitional between Ancien Régime and the reopening of political life to the gathered forces of a new society, after the explosive intervention of the French Revolution; transitional between regionalism (decaying estates and *Ständestaaten*) and Napoleonic administration; transitional between the characteristic struggle of state and church and that of a new epoch, when political authority would have to conciliate and control the multiple oppositions of a secular society. As a prisoner of history and of historical ratiocination, of geography

and spatial particularity, it is an evidence of its time. But it is also a version of the perennial "intestine struggle," as David Hume puts it, "between Authority and Liberty, [where] neither of them can absolutely prevail in the contest."<sup>34</sup> The terms of this debate remain present in all societies, and are fresh today. Hegel's language is obscure, often "theological"; some of his terms seem quaint ("monarchy," "estates"), while others are not ("bureaucracy," "civil society," "public opinion"): but the functional urgency of the issues he raises cannot be subject to much doubt. Consider only the problem, much canvassed especially by Jürgen Habermas, of how a public and legitimate authority can mediate between expert knowledge and individual caprice, averting the pitfalls of technocratic power and personal lack of standards for judging.<sup>35</sup>

The essential Hegelian issue, as I have stressed, was to strike a balance between the common consciousness and the will of groups and individuals. Thus, through his recondite secular Protestantism, Hegel sought to settle the problem of church and state, which he saw as paradigmatic for all practical questions of "subjectivity" and "objectivity." His insights also contributed to the founding of a "science of society" whose roots were also in liberal political economy and in the school of St.-Simon. But, whereas Hegel squinted forward from a model of settlement, we look backward at Hegel, reserving special parts of his doctrine for emphasis.

The notion of "society" (as a kind of *consensus gentium*) had long lain within the purview of political theory. The variety, hierarchy, and organic collaboration of the parts of society were implicit in the notion of estates. Categorical conflicts of a social nature were also well recognized: these occurred when bonds of fealty, service, and mutual obliga-

<sup>34</sup> David Hume, "Of the Origin of Government," in C. W. Hendel, ed., *David Hume's Political Essays* (New York, 1953), p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*, tr. J. Shapiro (Boston, 1970), p. 75.



tion broke down. Later, in the eighteenth century, more general theories of conflict in society and its increasing differentiation and competitiveness came to birth. There is a long history of this from Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees* to Kant's doctrine of "unsocial sociability" in *Idea for a Universal History*. Simultaneously, the political economists tried to discover laws of harmony in the apparent chaos of the division of labor and the commodity market. Finally, the French Revolution asserted—even if its authorities could not practice—the legal equivalence of all the units of society. Gradually, albeit constructed usually on strict principles of individualism, the concept of society began to assume metaphysical proportions of its own. Nationalism made it coincidental with the territorial limits of state power.

The state, during its long history of transformation, had early on sought the use of organic metaphor: it was the extension of the king's body; under absolutism, his proprietary rights over his territory and subjects were theorized in the same manner as his personal faculties of will, locomotion, and disposal of his intimate property. However, the king was subject to God; God judged the king and God's purpose dwelt within the king's bosom. Bizarre as these older beliefs may seem, they affirm historically that the concept of the state was prepared for concrete application by a cumulative and affirmative progression of the monarchy from person to role or function. This was not true of "society," whose independent claims from the *regnum* could long be represented as a disease, a "rebellion of the state's members." Today, with the situation quite reversed, we have to practice considerable historical understanding to grasp the thought of our ancestors. What is important to see, however, is that for a certain period of time the state was preeminently challenged by religion (*sacerdotium* vs. *regnum*) and that society, as presently understood, was a nullity. Natural rights philosophy abetted the slow ferment by which this situation became reversed. In this process, Protestantism

aiding, religion came tortuously to inhabit society, not the state. Even philosophical radicals, like Hobbes, resisted this result with their arguments.

In Hegel's time the outlines of a "science of society" were formed, partly under the impact of eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism, partly by the assumptions of political economy, partly by moral and practical judgments about popular consent and the limits of the state. But there was also a takeoff point from Hegelian philosophy. In this respect Lorenz von Stein's justification for a "science of society" is revealing: "Society is one of the most difficult concepts in political theory, not only because this concept is so general that it is hard to give it a specific meaning, but especially because one has got used to associating with this term a more or less precise meaning. This meaning was completely arbitrary, since there had hardly arisen an occasion which would have made us aware of the substance of this concept."<sup>36</sup> Here Stein is echoing the vague and cosmopolitan sense that his generation encountered in the word "society." And yet it already appeared to them a living, breathing thing, not a "disease of the state," but something more powerful and elemental, especially when organized as a revolutionary opponent of the existing territorial authority. Stein's brilliant book is, therefore, a trenchant account of the helplessness of the (Hegelian) state in view of the arousal of the French "social movement." Stein does not doubt from his experiences and reflections that society is *real*. But "if society is just as real, just as universal and just as necessary as is the state, then it must be possible to accomplish for the former what is considered necessary for any more thorough analysis of the latter: a conceptualized knowledge about its essence and a clarification of the inner contradictions of the term."<sup>37</sup> In Stein the Hegelian state

<sup>36</sup> Lorenz von Stein, "Preliminary Discourse" to *The History of the Social Movement in France, 1789-1850*, tr. K. Mengelberg (Totowa, 1964), p. 43.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

persists—but only as a buffeted ideal, overmastered by the social forces contending for its possession, a kind of female symbol. A definition of the "neutral state" is provided in remarkable clarity: "The state is the common will, the personal unity of all individuals. . . . In order to attain its own highest goals, the state, through its supreme power, must further the progress, wealth, vigor, and intelligence of all its citizens. . . . The basic principle of the state . . . is contained in the achievement of this task."<sup>38</sup> "Monarchy," Stein affirms, "is the purest manifestation of the independent personal state. . . . It has been most stable whenever it has used its power in accordance with the above idea of the state. It is jeopardized if it deviates from it; its past has rested on this principle, and its future will do so also."<sup>39</sup> Contrary to usual interpretations of the fall of Louis-Philippe in 1848, Stein felt that the sudden collapse of that monarch had not been due to his collusion with bourgeois interests, but that he had attempted, vainly and awkwardly, to assert an independent state power against the prevailing power of the dynamic sections of the industrial bourgeois class.<sup>40</sup> Stein still saw the "neutral state" as an ideal and goal—later to be expressed in his notion of "social monarchy"—but his interpretation of social revolution in France proffered little hope that the state would not perpetually be an arena of class struggle, always organized at the behest of society's predominant economic interests, interests that were agnostic about the form of regime so long as it would govern to their advantage. Thus Stein, still working within Hegelian categories, scrutinized the conflicts of society without sacrificing the hope for a political supremacy that could mitigate these conflicts. What is very striking about Stein's bifurcation of philosophy and sociology is that he stresses the terrible life-and-death reality of the social principle, and yet sees no resolution for man's common interest through society's own resources. Perhaps the modern ob-

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 335–339.



server will disdain his effort, since he completed his active life by teaching administration theory in Vienna and serving as consultant to Meiji Japan; perhaps his "ideology" will also be stamped as part of the farce of the twilight of the Ancien Régime; but I would judge his work worthy of our attention.

The Hegelian syntagma of "state . . . religion," which still troubled the Young Hegelians, is overcome in Stein's social theory. In his preoccupation with the stresses between state and society and his investigation of economic and class factors, he has entered the "disenchanted" world and ignored the transplantation of spirituality. Here truly it can be said that the gods have fled Valhalla. The insight which Burke had from the beginning and which Hegel canvassed in a far subtler fashion, Stein completely lacked. He failed to note that religion had fled the state and cleaved to the molecules of society, only to appear as parties, factions, or even charismatic leaders who would reenact all of Hegel's scenarios of subjectivity in a new setting, and not always as farce.

In the midst of this paradigmatic change we should pay some notice to the so-called "Hegelian Right" or "Old Hegelians." In most of current literature, these men—whose specific views were quite as diverse as those of the Hegelian Left—have been consigned to reactionary oblivion. In reality, they were a kind of middle force in the Prussian political debate. Without much lasting effect they attempted to pursue Hegel's sketch of the authoritative, plural, and neutral state, often sharing the same tortuous language with the epigoni of the Left. Rosenkranz, the biographer of Hegel, whose thought much later took a reactionary turn, reinforced the strategic syntagma in the very year of the master's death (1831): "Without thinking through the relation between state and church and without the immediate impulse to do so, there can be no [public] opinion. But without such thought freedom is not possible, for enslaved men

do not think about it, they leave it to their masters."<sup>41</sup> Rosenkranz, like Hegel, wanted both the achievement of independent thought and political solidarity.<sup>42</sup> Over a decade later he inveighed, like Hegel, against the innovation of political parties and the treason of the intellectuals: "Philosophy is in and of itself unpartisan, or better partyless. So should the philosopher be. He must be!"<sup>43</sup> Only God, Rosenkranz asserts, can be totally uncommitted; but the philosophers should ape the ways of God. These strictures against "parties" define the modest constitutionalism of the Right Hegelians, though some are apparently politically agnostic, like C. L. Michelet, who pronounced in 1848 that "the republic means nothing else but the common purpose . . . be it monarchical, aristocratic, or democratic."<sup>44</sup> Rosenkranz, in the same period, continues to argue that "the constitutional monarchy not only insures the unity of the whole, but also the political equality of the citizens, because it gives all the same rights and duties, as opposed to the prince. He is the necessary exception."<sup>45</sup> The same thesis is propounded by C. Rössler, almost a decade later: "constitutional government is only the means for the most feasible independence of interests and individuals. . . . [It] establishes rules according to recognized needs by the hindsight of historical continuity."<sup>46</sup>

The obduracy of the "Old Hegelians" in failing to alter their inherited paradigm is, of course, yoked to their failure

<sup>41</sup> Karl Rosenkranz, "Kurzer Begriff der öffentlichen Meinung," in Hermann Lübke, ed., *Die Hegelsche Rechte* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstadt, 1962), p. 61.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>43</sup> Rosenkranz, "Über den Begriff der politischen Partei," *ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>44</sup> Carl Ludwig Michelet, "Zur Verfassungsfrage (1848)," *ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>45</sup> Rosenkranz, "Republik und Constitutionnelle Monarchie," *ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>46</sup> Constantin Rössler, "System der Staatslehre," *ibid.*, pp. 272-273.

to measure the social and political world coming into being. They are probably well forgotten by political historians, for they made no breach toward the interpretation of the future, nor were they very helpful in solving the problems of Prussia, Germany, and Europe. None of them had the vision of their opponents, or of men such as Royer-Collard, Constant, Macaulay, Treitschke, or Lassalle. Yet they retained a vision of Hegel's harmonized state, which, paradoxically, had become retrograde in their own milieu, and yet would be resurgent much later as a critical problem. While denying the modern invention of party, they retained a faith that some institutional part, encompassing the whole, could act on behalf of the whole with a continuity of allegiance and purpose.

France had in the meantime experienced the July Revolution, when, according to Guizot, "France had not really wanted a new revolution," but had been thwarted by the intransigence of Charles X.<sup>47</sup> This was a partial triumph of "society," confirming Hegel's worst fears. Hegel sat and looked at his *Figaro* and recorded a stream of basically untranslatable and ungrammatical notes that bear a terrible resemblance to those of professors in our own time. He saw the events of 1830 not simply as unbalancing the precarious equilibrium between two principles he abhorred—Catholic monarchism and "atomistic liberalism"—but as a test between youth and age: "the youngsters also want to get into the act (*Das junge Geschlechte will auch an die Reihe kommen*)."<sup>48</sup> Hegel's fears were no doubt exaggerated. But the July Revolution also broke his careful syntagma. Once the lower classes, with their hereditary republicanism, learned again that their blood and muscle had been spent for others, they groped for the concept of a *real* revolution that would at least be *social*, and they groped for a defini-

<sup>47</sup> François Guizot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps* (Paris, 1858), I, 373.

<sup>48</sup> Hegel, *Berliner Schriften*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1956), p. 698.



tion of parallel institutions and a theory of leadership. This meant the transferral of their "faith" into civil society, as well as a diminishment of all faith and its distortion within sectarian movements that combined rationalism, mysticism, and practical mobilization. Hegel's arbitership of science and feeling in the state was broken by the French experience of 1830 and its aftermath.

Proudhon gives us the clearest instance of this transformation in theoretical language, combining hastily ingurgitated lessons from Hegel with an alien tradition of views on society and progress. Proudhon accepted, or developed in common, certain of Hegel's ideas about the architecture of knowledge and its relation to the political community, while unambiguously rejecting Hegel's idea of the state as mediator. Evidently influenced by Hegel's notion of the relationship between religion and philosophy, Proudhon attempted to combine this idea with the positivist conception of the advance of humanity. "Religion and philosophy," Proudhon asserts, "have in common that they embrace the universe in their contemplation and inquiry . . . the one in the hypothetical and indeterminate idea of God, his properties and purposes; and the other in ontological generalities, deprived of consistency and fertility."<sup>49</sup> Religion is spontaneous and nuanced, however, whereas philosophy, modified by experience, finally dissolves into science. The outmoded forms of the state, according to Proudhon, rest on a basis of religion or philosophy.<sup>50</sup> "Philosophy," he ventures, "today as always, is Girondin and Thermidorian; but the people is Jacobin."<sup>51</sup> Science, "the clear, complete, certain and rational understanding of order"<sup>52</sup> supersedes religion and philosophy by interpreting the symbols of the first and solving the problems which the second knew only how to pose. "Progress" is an ascent of the spirit toward science, by way of the three

<sup>49</sup> P.-J. Proudhon, *De la Création de l'ordre dans l'humanité, ou principes d'organisation politique*, in C. Bouglé and H. Moysset, eds., *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris, 1972), VI, 38.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 453 ff.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 460.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

consecutive epochs of religion, philosophy, and metaphysics (further defined as "the universal and supreme theory of order . . . of which the methods applied to particular sciences are only special applications").<sup>53</sup> Aside from this total bastardization of Hegel's thought, it is especially interesting to remark throughout Proudhon's diverse writings how, despite his suffocation of "religion" in "science," the energy of that concept has been captured for civil society, for, though "the communists seem sometimes to forget it . . . man requires a private life, too."<sup>54</sup> In the language of another culture, Proudhon shows us how religion has become detached from the importances of public life. While he poured out his metaphysical populism, the regime that he detested—Orleanism—was also turning its divorce from spirituality into a hallmark of the supremacy of society.

Although there is no evidence that he was ever much struck by Hegelian thoughts, Alexis de Tocqueville completes our survey. He is open to these questions, nowhere more than in his preliminary observations about America:

Men of religion fight against freedom, and lovers of liberty attack religions; noble and generous spirits praise slavery, while low, servile minds preach independence; honest and enlightened citizens are the enemies of all progress, while men without patriotism or morals make themselves the apostles of civilization and enlightenment! Have all ages been like ours? And have men always dwelt in a world in which nothing is connected? Where virtue is without genius, and genius without honor?<sup>55</sup>

The paradox of Tocqueville still abides in our midst. Tocqueville made much of the question of religion in the strange and oracular country he was studying. "The spirit of man," he wrote, "left to follow its bent, will regulate po-

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 355.

<sup>55</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 2 vols. (New York, 1969), I, Introduction, 17.

litical society and the City of God in uniform fashion; it will, if I dare put it so, seek to *harmonize* earth with heaven."<sup>56</sup> Tocqueville commented on the numberless sects in America, but noted also that they preached an identical morality. He remarked urbanely: "Though it is very important for man as an individual that his religion should be true, that is not the case for society. Society has nothing to fear or hope from another life; what is most important for us is not that all citizens should profess the true religion but that they should profess religion."<sup>57</sup> Hegel had said virtually the same thing, but had comprehended religion not within society, but as an adjunct to the state: "since religion is an integrating factor in the state, implanting a sense of unity in men's minds, the state should even require all its citizens to belong to a church."<sup>58</sup> The opposition is transparent and the syntagmatic transfer is complete.

Hegel, who wishes to see religious conformity weakened so that the state can, for the public good, inherit its unity, deplores the uninhibited sectarianism of North America. Tocqueville, on the other hand, discerns that in America the fundamental unity and strength of religious morality have been assimilated into society. Marx feels (in "The Jewish Question") that this will accentuate the contradictions between political and private man; Tocqueville asserts that it could contribute to their unity. Tocqueville writes that "America is still the place where the Christian religion has kept the greatest real power over men's souls," though he notes that "it cannot moderate their eagerness to enrich themselves."<sup>59</sup> Marx quotes from Tocqueville, but says, *contra* America, that "since the existence of religion is the existence of a defect, the source of this defect must be sought in the *nature* of the state itself. Religion no longer appears as the basis, but as the *manifestation* of secular

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 287.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 290.

<sup>58</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 270A, p. 168.

<sup>59</sup> *Democracy in America*, I, 291.



narrowness,"<sup>60</sup> and he exalts the "*political* elevation of man above religion."<sup>61</sup>

These three approaches are still with us; none has carried the day in political theory. None is obviously eternal, and each gains an advantage in certain circumstances. In retrospect, we can commend the prescience of Marx, who foresaw a quick end to the millennial church-state controversy of allegiance, and foresaw that the rise of groups or classes pitted against one another in social combat would demean the independent stature of the state and tilt theory against the syntagmatic vocabulary that had supported it. We are likewise indebted to Tocqueville, whose rare combination of curiosity, detachment, and traditional feeling exercised on a young republic produced the insight of how sectarian religious beliefs could contribute to a generalized democratic morality, producing a strength of society unknown in the Ancien Régime. But both these insights, amply applauded, are partly spent. The state remains, more powerful than ever; and much of our problem today is whether it will be a good or a bad state. To judge this or affect it, we must look at the concept of the state squarely. If we simply deplore its power or waste our energies on reducing it to an ordinary agent of society, we are, according to hard evidence, deluded. This is why a rereading of Hegel makes sense. We have seen "faith" squeezed into groups, parties, combatants in civil strife, antagonists over the definition of the "civil religion," organized behind obscure and partial beliefs. For better or worse, though having a state, without having much collective faith to sustain it or even to chastise it effectively, we still tend to acknowledge its power. If we still tend to theorize it as a fictive and needless outrage on our liberty, we acknowledge it as a reality and seek its favor or protection. We envision "society"—which is no easier for us to define as a source of will or wisdom than it was for Stein—as "good" or "legitimate." We flail the state

<sup>60</sup> Marx, "Judenfrage," p. 10.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

when, through our complacency toward it, it reflects and magnifies our habits of social corruption. We invent and approve daring triumphs of individual morality, and scream for the state to defend these bold acquisitions against the objections of our plotting neighbors in society.

Hegel's Prussia and his milieu of politics are far from our experience. But Hegel's problematic of politics may still be instructive if we have our archaeological instincts intact. It can teach us much about present dilemmas of "faith" and "reason," "knowledge" and "power," "community" and "individuality." We must become proficient in the history of our own culture, exploring its main channels, learning to avoid its silted-up creeks. These questions impose themselves, above all, on the United States, as the first nation created *de novo* confronts the first two hundred years of its experience. Has Seymour Martin Lipset's "first new nation" become Henry Fairlie's "spoiled child of the Western world," or are there other possibilities?

## HEGEL'S AMERICA

THE United States has often been cited, or adulated, as a bold experiment in state neutrality. But, in so arguing, one shifts his ground from the concept of neutrality I have been using to the rather different notion that neutrality means an extensive legal permissiveness for individual and group caprice, a subordination of the political order to the wants and desires of its component social parts, and an encouragement of sectarianism. Tocqueville saw both the dawning of a new egalitarian order and, paradoxically, the ethos of a considerable conformity in these arrangements, so different from European practice and public law. Only in the past two generations has there been a widespread feeling that the "neutrality" of the negative American public philosophy might be neither just nor fair. Yet this has rarely led to a critique of subjectivity.

As is well known, Hegel devoted some brief, rather perfunctory comment to our North American republic toward the end of his introductory lectures on the philosophy of history. These passages have sometimes been read with extreme permissiveness, either by those who wanted to defend Hegel from the charge of theorizing an *Ende der Geschichte* or by proponents of the "American mission."<sup>1</sup> In suggesting that America, as a "land of the future," was a likely candidate to overcome history's previous forms, the reader takes an unwarranted liberty with Hegel's text. The United States is rather an inchoate part of what Hegel calls the "Ger-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, tr. David E. Green (New York, 1964), pp. 41-42. Hegel's comments on America were written in Berlin in 1830 for his university course on world history.



manic world." It reveals a tantalizing incompleteness, not a higher consciousness of its own making. Like the rest of the Germanic world, it is Protestant in ethos, albeit horrifyingly sectarian, with an "unbounded license of imagination in religious matters."<sup>2</sup> At the end of his comment, Hegel gives two substantial reasons why the destiny of America cannot be of profound interest: (1) it lies in a future that no historical research can penetrate; and (2) it presents no features that would appear to illuminate the philosophy of history.

In short, those who misread these passages are prone to two kinds of error. In the first place, they confuse futurity with a philosophical possibility that Hegel had no disposition to grant. But more importantly, they imagine Hegel's account of world history to be based on sequences of the mustering and enforcement of state power. Here, to be sure, Hegel is not without ambiguity, since states do indeed command concentrated force, force at the service of a politics that materially determines the changing shape of world history. In this sense, politics as registered by major clashes of armed will is the motor of history and the prime catalyst of the growth of collective consciousness: "history is mind clothing itself with the form of events or the immediate actuality of nature."<sup>3</sup> But Hegel then goes on to say that the stages of historical development "are therefore presented as immediate natural principles." Here one should recall the Kantian distinction between the (hypothetical) teleology of nature and the mind's capacity for assigning general purposes to the phenomenal order.<sup>4</sup> Although Hegel and Kant

<sup>2</sup> Introduction to *The Philosophy of History*, tr. J. Sibree (New York, 1956), p. 85.

<sup>3</sup> *The Philosophy of Right*, tr. and ed. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), para. 346, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup> As stated, for example, in "Perpetual Peace," *Kant on History*, ed. L. W. Beck (New York, 1963), pp. 106-107. The distinctions suggested here are pertinently discussed in a somewhat different context by Manfred Riedel in "Nature and Freedom in Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right,'" *Hegel's Political Philosophy: Problems and*

differ in their interpretations of world history (with regard to the nature of cosmopolitanism, the mediated role of the individual in history, and the dialectical understanding of war and peace), Hegel's use of the words "immediate" and "nature" here suggests that the political is not the highest form of interpretation and that Kantian distinctions are in the background of the analysis (as was already explicit in *The Philosophy of Right*).<sup>5</sup>

The main distinction to be made is between the immediacy of the clatter of states through world history (which can be interpreted philosophically as an empirical account of how the Idea comes to be actualized in the *civitas terrena*) and the deeper question of the content of the Idea. The Idea is an accumulation of forms of consciousness that appear, persist, prevail, and are *aufgehoben* in a process of necessary fulfillment. These totalizing clusters are fewer and more fundamental than the political wills of the great states that queue up at history's ticket window, although the states, in an immediate way, are the natural carriers of the Idea.

Empirical history, then, as guided by philosophical interpretation, is basically political history for Hegel, but the true history of the Idea—that is, philosophical history—concerns the complex process of a few vital shifts of consciousness (or to use current language, total cultural paradigms). This has the effect of giving the history of philosophy primacy over the philosophy of history, just as we would expect from Hegel's account of his own system.<sup>6</sup> At the same time it explains why interpretations of Hegel's philosophy in terms of "might makes right" falter before the explicit superiority that he assigns to the categories of Abso-

---

*Perspectives*, ed. Z. A. Pelczynski (Cambridge, 1971), esp. pp. 136–145.

<sup>5</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 337, pp. 214–215.

<sup>6</sup> Most reliably and comprehensively expounded in the third edition of the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (Berlin, 1830).

lute Spirit. It also takes us beyond the realm of *Volksgeist* narrowly understood (after all, Montesquieu's cosmopolitanism has never been "unmasked" simply because he placed the concept "esprit général d'un peuple" at the center of his analytic). Adopting this view, we now have less difficulty in unraveling the much travestied relationship between "phenomenology" and "history": the former is the subjective, the latter the objective methodology, leading to a still more totalizing synthesis of historico-logical will and mind that finds its highest diachronic expression in the history of philosophy, and passes over by a not readily available language into the pure movement of the Concept (*Begriff*) after it has gathered in its concrete human richness.

These are deep matters. They are introduced only for the purpose of making clear that whatever political future Hegel envisaged for America would have no necessary connection with the advancement of the Idea, unless it could be further shown that, beyond the marshaling of physical power, America displayed a richer, more comprehensive consciousness, especially one qualitatively superior to the *Germanic* (read: Western European) notion of freedom and its supporting institutions. State power is necessary to the Idea, but not sufficient if its effects are repetitive and profitless. If we choose to see the matter in this light, it then becomes piquant to inquire whether American providentialism has not been cast in doubt precisely because it is deficient in those areas that Hegel assigned to Absolute Spirit.

We pass on to some of the things Hegel said about America that are not subject to misreading. He tells us, in the first place, that America (of the 1820s) has a merely "subjective unity."<sup>7</sup> This phrase recalls his despondent cadences about Rousseau and the French Revolution, and his judgment that a formal "general will," overriding all mediating principles in its way, can end only in the acts of the tyran-

<sup>7</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 85.



nical individual and produce "a maximum of frightfulness and terror."<sup>8</sup> However, what Hegel seems to mean is rather that the symbolic headship or sovereignty of the United States is vested in an individual for a limited period of time, making him the emblem of a merely "subjective" (that is, temporary and fractional) unity. Hegel goes on to imply that the American is not both *bourgeois* and *citoyen*; he is only *bourgeois*. Thus he is beholden only to his private will within a "system of needs," which is the most primitive structure of what Hegel calls "bürgerliche Gesellschaft."<sup>9</sup> The fundamental character of the American community, Hegel suggests, is formed by "the endeavor of the individual after acquisition, commercial profit, and gain; the preponderance of private interest, devoting itself to that of the community only for its own advantage. . . ."<sup>10</sup> This comment is very much in the line of all "aesthetic" critics of American life (John Stuart Mill, for example); but what we want to notice especially in the Hegelian context is that there is simplistic inadequacy, not social alienation, in America. The American is not wretched because he is torn between being two opposed kinds of man. Perhaps he is not wretched at all. He is, very simply, "one-dimensional man." According to Hegel, he cannot be a *citoyen* because he is not yet incorporated into a valid state. He finds his being in the most primitive and individualistic rudiments of *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*.

Passing by the associated point about religious sectarianism, which I have already mentioned, we come to Hegel's most significant view. America has yet to build those more

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *The Phenomenology of Mind*, tr. J. B. Baillie (London, 1949), pp. 604-605; *Philosophy of Right*, para. 5A, p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Philosophy of Right*, para. 183, p. 123: "In the course of the actual attainment of selfish ends—an attainment conditioned in this way by universality—there is formed a system of complete interdependence, wherein the livelihood, happiness and legal status of one man is interwoven with the livelihood, happiness and rights of all . . . the external state, the state based on need. . . ."

<sup>10</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 85.

complex, mediating parts of civil society—cultivation (*Bildung*), execution of political justice (*Polizei*), and “corporations”—out of which a true state emerges. It is not just that America is a civil society without being a defined state *à l'européenne*; she lacks some of the basic preconditions for being a state in the sphere of civil society itself. Or at least, even though where there is a constituted public authority it may be hard not to say “state,” “the general object of the existence of this state is not yet fixed and determined, and the necessity for a firm combination does not yet exist; for a real State and a real Government arise only after a distinction of classes has arisen, when wealth and poverty become extreme, and when such a condition of things presents itself that a large portion of the people can no longer satisfy its necessities in the way in which it has been accustomed so to do. . . . North America will be comparable with Europe [hence subject to analysis under the concept of ‘Germanic world’] only after the immeasurable space which that country presents to its inhabitants shall have been occupied, and the members of the political body shall have begun to be pressed back on each other.”<sup>11</sup>

There is no ambiguity about Hegel's argument. America is suspended outside the Germanic stream of history until (1) its territorial frontiers are stabilized; (2) the competition over scarce goods becomes more extreme; (3) structured class antagonisms are manifested; and (4) people feel physically, economically, and psychologically cramped. Only then can the United States acquire a “real State and a real Government.”

What does this mean? It means, organically speaking, that the tensions of living together in our advanced “civil society” (the sphere of contradictions) will produce the groundwork of the modern public experience, the necessity of creating intermediary “corporations,” and the universal disposition to become both *bourgeois* and citizen, not merely in order to compete anarchically, but to compete

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85–86.

gainfully at a higher "estate" level, where group interests, which have risen above individual interests, will enter the marketplace to profess their identity with the general good, vying with each other. Functionally, this means that the need for a universal regulatory class will arise, a class that can provide neutral supervision from a truly "statist" position. Formally, it means the conversion of the nation into a constitutional monarchy of a particular sort, inasmuch as the "ultimate self in which the will of the state is concentrated . . . is immediate individuality. . . . The monarch . . . is essentially characterized as *this* individual."<sup>12</sup> Though not stated in *The Philosophy of History*, it is implicit in Hegel's political thought that a fully developed America would be monarchical. But more important than the character of the monarch (like virtually all earlier philosophers accepting the form as a category of good government, Hegel believed the monarchy should be hereditary) is the "second moment in the power of the crown"—that is, the monarch's personal council of advisers—and the more metaphysical "third moment," in which the subjective majesty of the ruler and the objective faith in the structure of laws are organically joined.<sup>13</sup>

We have already noted that Marx saw both the extensive suffrage and the religious disestablishmentarianism of

<sup>12</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 280, p. 184. Hegel is customarily taken to be something of a trimmer, traitor, or crackpot in his "deduction" of the correspondence of sovereignty and monarchy. None of the writers in the Pelczynski volume has anything good to say about this; cf. K.-H. Ilting's bitter remark in "The Structure of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right,'" *Hegel's Political Philosophy*, p. 109: "[Hegel] irremediably disturbed the structure of the theory of the modern state by treating sovereignty as the problem not of a social and democratic state, but of a monarchical ruler." This may well be; but Hegel's sovereign cannot simply be discarded as an "unintelligible exception" to his theory. In *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1969), he makes bold to conclude that his theory of sovereignty is the "higher principle of the modern age . . . which Plato was not acquainted with" (p. 251).

<sup>13</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, paras. 283, 285, p. 187.



America as aspects of the fullest ripening of bourgeois culture (Lorenz von Stein would soon furnish similar insights with regard to the Second French Republic of 1848).<sup>14</sup> But what for Marx seems advanced seems to Hegel simply inchoate. One of several valid explanations for this is that Marx had perceived in bourgeois culture a fictive state striving to reveal itself as pure society, while Hegel observed within the "world of the Germanic spirit" an elastic young civil society gradually being compressed into the more rugged identity of a state. And to be a monarchical state would seem the necessary, though not sufficient, condition of bearing the Idea, of not only entering but altering world history.

There have been various imaginative ways of interpreting America's civic development. One has been to conceive of America as a vanguard state, the "first new nation," breaking the cake of custom baked in old Europe and fostering a democratic expansion of social possibility and public morale that would in time leave no part of the world uninfluenced.<sup>15</sup> Whatever Tocquevillean skepticism remained in this thesis has been time and again routed by battalions of native providentialists.

Seen from a certain angle, Marxism itself can be accommodated to this vision. Marx early recognized the American example (religious disestablishmentarianism, extensive suffrage, the uninhibited play of "civil society," dynamic

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Karl Marx, "Bruno Bauer, 'Die Judenfrage,'" in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, tr. and ed. T. B. Bottomore (New York, 1964), pp. 8-12; Lorenz von Stein, *History of the Social Movement in France, 1789-1850*, tr. and ed. K. Mengelberg (Totowa, 1964), pp. 351-355. For Marx this "flowering" would necessarily end in contradiction and revolution; for Stein, perhaps in reform. Cf. Stein, p. 362: "Social peace and the existence of the republic depend upon the possibility of discovering and establishing a common basis of interest [between capital and labor]."

<sup>15</sup> See Seymour Martin Lipset, *The First New Nation: The United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (New York, 1963).

industrial potential) as a capstone of bourgeois development.<sup>16</sup> To be sure, a socialist revolution would have to supervene upon this ripened bourgeois system. But America would not necessarily be deprived of a premier role in the new way of things. As Trotsky once wrote to the Americans: "Your revolution will be smoother in character than ours; you will not waste your energies and resources in costly social conflicts after the main issues have been decided; and you will move ahead so much the more rapidly in consequence."<sup>17</sup>

A second notion has been the provocative Hartzian theory of the "fragment," according to which all American history flows contextually from the forces in being at a certain state of European history.<sup>18</sup> America, settled and given its tone by "liberals," developed its native tensions, possibilities, and self-images within a transplanted and truncated political system. It could spawn neither a rich traditionalism nor an aggressive socialism. Today, an America turned outward to face international responsibilities is speculatively ill-equipped for the confrontation with alien political doctrines.

Quite different in implication is the species of thought that regards America, for better or for worse, as having passed through and discarded certain technologies and social forms, thereby opening the breach to a "postindustrial age."<sup>19</sup> Though the potential of that age may appall some

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Marx's letter to P. V. Annenkov, 28 December 1846: "You have only to wipe North America off the map of the nations and you get anarchy, the total decay of trade and modern civilization." *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Selected Works* (New York, 1968), p. 675.

<sup>17</sup> From *Fourth International*, March-April 1951, reprinted in *The Age of Permanent Revolution: A Trotsky Anthology*, ed. Isaac Deutscher (New York, 1964), p. 215.

<sup>18</sup> See Louis Hartz, *The Founding of New Societies* (New York, 1964), pp. 4, 46.

<sup>19</sup> The variants of this thesis and the critical debate surrounding them are well summarized in *Technology and Values* and *Technology*

timorous spirits and disenchant sinking classes and marginal intellectuals, so the argument runs, there is no setting back the clock. In fact there is an athletic joy in going forward into the unexplored. Sometimes the possibilities of this journey are seen as an "end of ideology," sometimes as the equivalent of revolution. As a lately much publicized French writer, taunting his countrymen with the *défi américain*, puts it: "The revolution of the twentieth century will take place in the United States. It is only there that it can happen. And it has already begun. Whether or not that revolution spreads to the rest of the world depends on whether or not it succeeds first in America."<sup>20</sup> An interesting facet of the postindustrial thesis is that, welcomed or deplored as the new age may be, its agony or promise is seen as being thrashed out first in America, in most cases between a society that is basically innovative and flexible and a political authority that is suspected either of archaic rigidity or reactionary designs.

A fourth notion combines Hartz's "liberal" thesis with the idea of human fulfillment in democratic collectivism. But here the emphasis is placed not so much on the creativity of society as on the capacity of political institutions to capture and promote that creativity. In this image, the social development of European politics (not excluding the Communist East, although Sweden is often seen as a special touchstone) is viewed as lighting a beacon to guide a dilatory America. In other words, America, for special reasons, has remained "liberal" (that is, conservative) too long, but must inevitably take its place in the march toward a corporate and participatory social democracy. The most elegant advocate of this thesis is the French law professor Georges Burdeau, whose massive seven-volume *Traité de*

---

*and the Polity*, research reviews nos. 3 and 4, Harvard University Program on Technology and Society (Cambridge, Mass., 1969).

<sup>20</sup> Jean-François Revel, *Without Marx or Jesus: The New American Revolution Has Begun*, tr. J. F. Bernard (New York, 1971), p. 1.



*science politique* is, happily, in the process of being reissued.<sup>21</sup> Contemporary life, Burdeau argues, is concrete and participatory, fully mediated through social groups and mass parties. Man is no longer the abstract citizen of liberal theory; he is the *homme situé*, embedded in the welfare politics of his own destiny. Institutions and laws must necessarily come to reflect this fact, and they are in the process of doing so. Only America, so to speak, survives as a quaint liberal example of *liberté-autonomie* and "governed democracy." However, "the American is, just as much, if not more than the Frenchman, the Englishman, or the Italian, an 'homme situé.' Perhaps the conditioning he experiences [through lack of immediate political access to his own destiny] is less painful for him than for the others; but it is nonetheless inexorable. A gilded cage is still a cage."<sup>22</sup> Although it might seem that Burdeau's *homme situé* behaves like a bird that will always need to imagine a cage surrounding it, the notion of America as laggard in evolving concrete forms of politics and their accompanying social justice is worthy of scrutiny.

A few years ago Samuel P. Huntington provoked the admiration of some and the skepticism of others when he argued, by means of historical, juristic, and functional analysis, that Americans had been living under a disguised Tudor monarchy since earliest times.<sup>23</sup> According to this interpretation "the ease of modernization within society [in America] precluded the modernization of political institutions," thus producing a relative "irrelevance of the American polity to the rest of the world."<sup>24</sup> Huntington's concept of the

<sup>21</sup> Georges Burdeau, *Traité de science politique*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1949-1957); especially relevant are Volume V, *La Démocratie gouvernée: l'état libéral et ses techniques politiques* (1953) and Volume VI, *La Démocratie gouvernante: son assise sociale et sa philosophie politique* (1956).

<sup>22</sup> *La Démocratie gouvernante*, p. 91.

<sup>23</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, 1968), pp. 108, 115 ff.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 129, 158.

Tudor polity reflects, in a different manner, some of the curious deficiencies that Hartz assigns to American social and political thought as a whole. It makes no positive judgment on the predestinarianism of Burdeau's *démocratie gouvernante*—indeed it rather shuns the issue—while it implicitly acknowledges the play of many of the dynamic societal virtues that some adherents of the postindustrial theory impute to the creativity of American modernization. In this process the social and political forms that had been kept interdependent and coherent in Tocquevillean thought and at least compatible, if not compellingly so, in Marxist thought are divided and set off against each other.

The purpose here has been not to inventory the possible or plausible interpretations of social-civic *élan* in America's development or participation in world history, but to prepare the ground for a contemporary use of the Hegelian analysis. In this preparation we can make two critical distinctions: (1) the distinction between society and political authority in America; (2) the distinction between those theorists of American development who stress the social aspects of the question and those who stress the political.

It goes without saying that the dichotomy of society and politics is a heuristic liberal invention which may or may not tell us what we wish to know about the particular "sovereign" organization of human beings that we are studying. But at this point at least two observations intrude. The first is that the discrimination made here is characteristic of most modern methodology, whether it be Hegelian, Marxist, modern American, or what. The real question is what relative importance or autonomy we assign to the two concepts, a matter that depends on personal values, intellectual experience, and political ideology. The second is that differing emphases will produce quite different lines of interpretation and different results.

Most American theorists (whether American by training or by bias) have preferred to treat the politics of the United States as an epiphenomenon of its society, or as a "subsys-

tem"—to assign cardinal virtues or methodological priorities to the latter that they denied the former. Doubtless it could be shown by some tortuous intellectual reflection that this preference is connected with Locke's remarks about the relative standing of society and government in the *Second Treatise*; but one knows more substantially that America was a nation that expanded and flourished with society ever present, and government (at least central government or the "state") not always very near. At any rate, there is considerable evidence for an experience of an ideology having become a methodology.

What happens if we readjust the balance or even presume politics to have primacy over society?<sup>25</sup> We find, in terms of this discussion, some new orientations. We discover, for instance, that those who prefer to base their analysis of America on "polity" or "political thought" or "institutional forms" (for example, Huntington, Hartz, and Burdeau) rather than on society, technology, economic development, and the like, reach conclusions that are characteristically more nuanced and pessimistic than do liberals or Marxists who see political order as a mere variable of social technique and existing social forces. There is a reinforcement of the idea that the state is to be understood not simply *à travers* social processes, but as an independent framework embodying law and culture, and as a special nexus of public morale joining the personalities of its members. By implication, according to Huntington, the American polity seems antique to others, perhaps even to its own inhabitants. By implication, according to Hartz, American political thought has been unable to bear the burden of clarifying world history. By implication, according to Burdeau, the American citizen-participant, although like his European brother an *homme situé*, lives in a gilded cage where he sings sweetly and is fed richly by his keeper.

<sup>25</sup> In strictly Hegelian terms we could not do this unless it was clear that "a real State and a real Government" had come on the scene in America.



These lines of argument draw us closer to Hegel in many ways. It is not that Hegel would agree with Huntington's selection of the deficiencies of the American monarchy, or that he would be disposed to grant Hartz's view of world history, or that he would accept Burdeau's *homme situé* as the perfect carrier of the *Gemeinleben*. However, he would notice resemblances, not least of which is the renewal of the state-society tension. At this point, then, we rejoin Hegel (not uncritically) to see what his philosophy of the state can clarify in regard to current predicaments.

Let us put out of our minds for a moment the biases we have harvested from the American family and the American school, from the reading of history, or—as we grew older and more sophisticated—the digestion of tracts on democratic theory, modernization and development, and the like. Without denying the hope and meaning of progress, let us preserve a healthy skepticism toward it. Let us try to imagine ourselves as modern Western man without preconditions, living in America and trying to make sense out of Hegel.

So far as I can treat the relevant issues here I shall adopt the following strategy. First, I shall sketch briefly what I take to be the Hegelian theory of the state. Then, under three headings handled in a broadly theoretical way, I shall attempt to apply the Hegelian matrix to the contemporary United States. The three headings (which are meant to be illustrative, not exclusive) are the following: the problem of conflict and unity; the problem of the “universal class”; and the problem of sovereign majesty. Although numerous Hegelian texts are useful for this exercise, I shall be mainly reflecting on the so-called *Jenaer Realphilosophie* and *The Philosophy of Right*.

Between these two texts there is a clarifying continuity and not a conflict, as I once suggested, and as Shlomo Avineri has capably demonstrated in a recent essay.<sup>26</sup> Despite

<sup>26</sup> G. A. Kelly, *Idealism, Politics and History: Sources of Hegelian*

his ambiguously Platonic (and nostalgic) treatment of political forms in a slightly earlier period, Hegel had by 1805 arrived at the fundamental structures and interrelated components of his theory of the state.<sup>27</sup> Greece is *aufgehoben*, if not forsworn; the functional connections of family, civil society, and state are established; the character of the monarchical constitution is developed; and—not least—the superiority of Absolute Spirit to Objective Spirit (called *Wirklicher Geist* in the Jena manuscript) is confirmed. The modern state, as I have maintained elsewhere, is both differential *and* integral; it is *vermittelt* (mediated); it must be justified—one gives allegiance to it—only through its being rationalized, thought out rather than felt as an immediate presence. Thus for the *Staatsleute* or *Beamten* the state is cerebral.<sup>28</sup> This is not to be regarded as a defect in cultivating obligation, for it must be remembered that Hegel, like Aristotle, took thought to be the highest pleasure, akin to beauty.<sup>29</sup> For the other, less educated classes of men (at least in my interpretation), the state inspires pride and loyalty through its central symbol, the monarch; through the reflection of its unity in the corporations, which are close to everyday life; and through the apprehension of brotherhood in an essentially religious form.

The state enables those other institutions and common experiences (some of which lead man beyond the state to the realm of Absolute Spirit), which in turn render the state the most potent of humanizing forces in history. It is important to grasp this reciprocity in order to do jus-

---

*Thought* (Cambridge, 1969), p. 326; and S. Avineri, "Labor, Alienation, and Social Classes in Hegel's *Realphilosophie*," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, I, 1 (Fall 1971), 96–119. Cf. Hegel, *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, pp. 213–263.

<sup>27</sup> We also know from his unfinished essay on the German constitution (1802) that Hegel was capable of looking at contemporary political problems with great realism.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Philosophy of Right*, para. 257, p. 155: "political virtue is the willing of the absolute end in terms of thought."

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *Enzyklopädie*, in *fine*.

tice to Hegel. The most homely example of how this action occurs is found in defense against outside aggression and internal breakdown.<sup>30</sup> Beauty, worship, and speculation are suspended when the cannons are pounding or anarchy rages through the streets. "A terrible beauty is born" is not in the line of Hegel's thinking. Thus, as Avineri correctly proposes, the Hegelian state, in its proper functioning, is both "instrumental" and "immanent."<sup>31</sup> It is instrumental because it secures the concord that leads man toward his situational awareness of the absolute. It is immanent because it is the general form by which man's aspiration is reconciled with his particularity and actuality.

The state, as Hegel makes abundantly clear, is not merely a system or political extrapolation of *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*; but neither is it a foreign, external mold that is merely clamped over the contours of society. The state is the property of all (as opposed to the ideology of the Ancien Régime), but it is not merely their contrivance or convenience (as in liberal theory). Nor, as in later liberal idealism, do we find any laborious effort to identify the state with the national community while retaining a suspicion of the depravity of government power. Hegel is not shy of authority, to say the least. He sees no contradiction between the interests of sovereignty and subjectship, provided that the mediating executive class can base itself on "universal" principles.

It is sometimes argued that the *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* is the sphere of turmoil, confusion, and conflict, while the state is the empyrean reconciler of all interests—through wise adjudication or, if necessary, legal coercion. Naturally, in pursuing Hegelian analysis, there will sometimes be good heuristic reasons for using such a dichotomy (as, for example, in analyzing Marx's *Critique of Hegel's "Philosophy of*

<sup>30</sup> Cf. "Rede zum Antritt des philosophischen Lehramtes an der Universität Berlins, Okt. 22, 1818," *Berliner Schriften*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1956), p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> S. Avineri, "Labor, Alienation, and Social Classes," p. 112.



*Right*"). However, it is more proper to recognize the inseparability of the state from the most highly developed form of civil society. The functions of regulating conflict and spiritualizing are mingled throughout both entities. Both the "corporation" (which harmonizes man on a small scale and renders him as apt for the fraternity of the state as he is naturally for the family) and the "police" (which regulates the conflict of particular wills) are parts of civil society, though they must be understood, together with education, as the special parts of it that make contact with the universality of the state. Hegelian politics is a healthy circulatory system and not an inert *pousse-café*. The state must really be understood as the majesty, regularity, and fluidity of its subordinate arrangements—"metaphysical" not simply because of its place in a philosophical scheme or in world history, but because it is the set of organs that inspires the common allegiance and is, so to speak, sheltered from the scourge of dissent.<sup>32</sup> Once the state becomes identified as partisan, the Hegelian system begins to dissolve. But it is not enough to show that state and society are in complicity to perform this dissolution; one must also show that the state lacks an autonomous capacity of dominion and that society can be specified as the sphere of unjust inequalities.

Thus, although I shall occasionally resort to a simplified image of state-society dichotomy in the ensuing discussion, it should be understood that I have something considerably more complex in mind.

"Government," Hegel writes, "comes on the scene and must supervise the preservation of every sphere. . . . Government is the universal supervisor; the individual is mired in the particular."<sup>33</sup> This statement is made in the specific

<sup>32</sup> Of course, the administrative "pallor" of the state (which Hegel keeps very free of nationalist histrionics) might prove to be its vulnerable spot, since awesome burdens of formal rectitude are placed on state agents without the emotional kindling of the populace.

<sup>33</sup> *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, p. 233.

context of class disruption and economic crisis, akin to the "closure" of *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* that I earlier evoked with reference to America. I do not think, however, that we should take "comes on the scene" to mean the inauguration of government or the state. The state is in germ in all cohesive societies and does not merely spring into being at some given critical point. Whatever the primitive origin of the institutions of family, society, and political authority, they affect and renew one another at ever more complex levels. We must take Hegel's remark as synchronic: the state achieves a full development because of and through the fact that society has come to be composed of spheres whose competition is increasingly deleterious to the life of the whole.<sup>34</sup> The true "Germanic" state arises when its society is compressed and torn. But the state, as regulator, is quite compatible with the genius and values of such a society. As such, "the state is the existence, the power of right, the keeping of contract and . . . the actual unity of the world"—the cornerstone of a unity of progressively realized elements.<sup>35</sup> It is this culminating process that Hegel saw far short of realization in the United States, and it is a later phase of this process that must occupy our attention in the following discussion.

1. *The problem of conflict and unity.* When Lorenz von Stein took Hegel's theory of the state in the direction of a sociology of early industrial capitalism, he noted and preserved a split between ideal and actual states.<sup>36</sup> Stein's ideal state, no less than Hegel's, is the sphere of unity, allegiance, and justice. But nature ordains otherwise: she creates society, which, further divided into classes with opposing interests, is always striving to possess the state and always man-

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Philosophy of Right*, para. 256, p. 155: "the state as such is not so much the result as the beginning. It is within the state that the family is first developed into civil society, and it is the Idea of the state itself which disrupts itself into these two moments."

<sup>35</sup> *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, p. 234.

<sup>36</sup> Stein, *Social Movement*, pp. 44-56.

aging to do so from a perspective of class dominance.<sup>37</sup> Real states, then, are the political forms of the coercive paramountcy of a class. The passage from political philosophy to sociology was the result not so much of the exhaustion of philosophy as of a recognition by Stein and others that philosophy unaided by practical research could not achieve a resolution of tensions in the industrial state. Stein's theory was carried forward by both Marx and Mosca. Marx specified the vast range of confrontation between propertied and propertyless in industrial society; Mosca insisted on the endlessness of oligarchical dominance in the state. Both—one by way of the theory of ideology, the other through the concept of the "political formula"—sought to account for the strange unity of values that could accompany the domination of the whole of society by a part. In each case, the independence of the "ideal state," even as a plausible norm or aspiration, was discredited.

In the liberal tradition, the ideal state was rarely a vitalizing form of superior unity, as Hegel had maintained; more often it was a superior set of procedural rules establishing "hindrances to hindrances of freedom" and basing its legitimacy on a widespread tacit consent in these procedures, especially the autonomy of the courts and the efficacy of popular elections. In liberal practice, as society grew more complex, this proceduralism soon had to be formulated at the level of the "group." It was important to postulate groups for two reasons. First, the word (especially with the clever introduction of the predicates "latent" and "manifest") was anomalous enough to account for everything previously covered by "individuals," except possibly anti-social deviants. Secondly, the concept was sufficiently bloodless—avoiding the categories of race, class, religion—to be able to stand in abstract relationship to these things, much as "individual" had stood to "person." Finally, however (reproducing the utilitarian transformation of the conscientious consent of seventeenth-century liberalism), procedur-

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51, 55.



al harmony was held to be inherent in the play of the groups themselves. The state, reduced to the bare bones of government offices and roles, became a group among others; and one no longer spoke of that "*ars artium*, the government of men."

Thus we can see that the Hegelian mode of analysis suffered from the development of two discrete political traditions, lines of argument that competitively, or sometimes in conjunction (the product being a cynical realism), "withered away" the state—without, however, caring to take seriously most of the problems and tasks for which the state had been theorized in the first place. And in Hegelian terms it had been theorized specifically to deal with the set of conditions in which group anarchy occurs and in which society, unaided, has no means of promoting the breakthrough to absolute forms of spirit for its people.

Abstract as these observations have been, it seems to me that they have decisive bearing on the American predicament, which—if I may be so bold—is that of a complex and increasingly turbulent society crying out for a state that would be not merely the fictive class state of Marx or the oligarchical smokescreen of Mosca. At this point we see that the postulation of some ethereal and static ideal state (and thus a closed society) is not the issue (and I presume that it was not for Hegel). English-speaking intellectuals exhausted a decade fighting over Karl Popper, when they should have been studying Hegel's texts. What we are concerned with, rather, is the boundary beyond which a state ceases to be suspect as a weapon of a part of society and comes to be regarded, however imperfectly, as an instrument of the general welfare that does not depend on vagaries of ideology for its maintenance, and yet is something more concrete than the mere proceduralism of liberal thought.

Current ways of looking at the question, especially from the vantage point of the primacy of sociology, do not encourage any easy resolution. The essential dispute—unity

versus conflict, voluntary harmony versus coercion—is posited within sociology as a result of its contact with the grand discourse of political philosophy. But it is posited in such a way that political authority must still, according to the canons of the discipline, be regarded as an epiphenomenon of the mechanisms of society. When Parsons and his tribe, following Durkheim, specify solidarity in terms of socially shared values and relate (political) stability to these criteria; or when Dahrendorf attacks this assumption from premises owing in part to Marx, in part to Weber, claiming that it is constraint that causes the social system to hold its shape, neither grants an independence to the state that would allow it to be instrumental and immanent in the Hegelian sense.<sup>38</sup> Sociology is self-defeating in the realm of political thought because it cannot tell us what kind of state it would be good for us to live in; it can only furnish a certain number of recipes for criticizing or approving the states we actually do live in. For all that, it must be said that the “constraint theory” of Dahrendorf—which makes authority superior to property—at least points toward a reformation of the theory of the state (still, however, a Machiavellian state) in a way that is foreclosed by the treatment of political systems as porous behavioral species of the genus social system.<sup>39</sup>

The intention here is not to praise the notion of independ-

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (New York, 1964), p. 42: [Society is] a set of common value patterns with the internalized need disposition structure of the constituent personalities”; David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York, 1965), p. 177: “a political system that consists of its members bound together by a political division of labor”; Ralf Dahrendorf, “In Praise of Thrasy-machus,” *Essays in the Theory of Society* (Stanford, 1966), p. 140: “according to the constraint approach norms are established and maintained only by power, and their substance may well be explained in terms of the interests of the powerful.”

<sup>39</sup> Cf., for example, Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., *Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach* (Boston, 1966), pp. 17–18.

ent state majesty or to charge that Stein, Marx, Mosca, and so on did not know what they were talking about. I am exploring the theme of the "primacy of the state" as problematic. Americans, especially, fear this primacy (because for them it is Machiavellian), but they increasingly *behave* as if the state had this virtue. I have in mind here something akin to the phenomenon Alasdair MacIntyre describes with regard to faith: "The survey of contemporary attitudes among the readers of *New Society* (1963) showed a majority both for the belief that Christian morality is moribund and for the belief that this is a sad thing. . . . We find among some of the best-educated by our conventional standards a paradoxical wish to hold on to a morality which conflicts with their own morality on matters of central importance."<sup>40</sup> My subject here is not religious morality, but I suspect strongly that the same kind of observation would hold for the state. Many educated Americans are trained or have come to feel that the state is either a fiction masking an unjust elite dominance or a mere temporary vector of social forces, subject to rapid alteration. Moreover, they are methodologically committed to variants of these two doctrines if they happen to be social scientists. Yet many Americans periodically express the wish that this were not so, that public allegiance could be a rational and authentic exchange of trust, free from dependence on coercion, ideology, or the shiftings of the political marketplace. Beyond this feeling, there is forming an inchoate but growing body of speculation that sees a dead end for pluralism and the need for a new "judicialism" or "general-willingness."<sup>41</sup> The mood is obviously connected with the social frustrations of the 1960s and with a deep sense of the loss of public authority.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, *Against the Self-Images of the Age* (London, 1971), p. 21.

<sup>41</sup> E.g., Theodore Lowi, *The End of Liberalism* (New York, 1969), pp. 297 ff.

<sup>42</sup> See especially, Hannah Arendt's fine essay on authority in *Between Past and Future* (New York, 1954), pp. 91-141.



However, the return from particular interventions (both private and social) to a more stable judicialism and the retreat of public law from administrative fiat to rule-minded legislation may run us either into the familiar problem of applying Rousseauian norms to a vastly complicated society, or into the primitive division of powers theorized by Montesquieu, which, read in the light of subsequent sociology, gradually gave rise to those notions of Bentley, Parsons, Almond, and others that are indicative of the impasse itself. The undoubted spirit of American thought is to return to these masters. But here again, Hegel has some cogent things to say in both directions.<sup>43</sup> Rousseau gives us a state that satisfies our longings for legitimacy, but cannot do the job in modern times. Montesquieu gives us a judicial society that guards us against the state, but in conditions where we now scream for the state to be "ours" and to take charge of the common welfare.

The welfare state is indeed a one-dimensional monster if, as disarmed by "group theory," it shows no capacity to help us beyond supplying basic training in the corporate grabbiness of *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*. Hegel did not, of course, theorize the modern welfare state, even though the state he proposed has many explicit welfare overtones. Many Americans would express relief that neoliberalism rather than Hegelianism provides the rationale of the current polity, and would be willing to maintain with Sir Isaiah Berlin that "the case for social legislation or planning, for the welfare state or socialism, can be constructed with as much validity from considerations of the claims of negative liberty as from those of its positive brother."<sup>44</sup> Indeed, the known and imagined propensities of the "metaphysical state" will not be defended by this writer, who is

<sup>43</sup> On the abstract inadequacy of the division of powers, see *Phenomenology*, p. 603; on Rousseau, *Philosophy of Right*, para. 258A, p. 157.

<sup>44</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford, 1969), p. xlvi.

using Hegel as an analytical tool and not as a *beau idéal*.<sup>45</sup> Still, we may well be disturbed by the fact that the neo-liberal or postliberal welfare state seems dispiriting rather than spiritualizing, especially since it is so obviously powerful.

If we look at the question of unity and conflict from another angle—that of the aggrieved—we get a further hint of why society by itself is incompetent to make a state. To show this I shall borrow some categories from a work on Latin American political development by Martin Needler: “anomic” violence, “representational” violence, and “revolutionary” violence. According to the author, *anomic* violence is characterized by “lack of coherent political purpose. . . . [It] performs functions primarily related to individual psychology rather than to the political system, such as releasing tension or . . . [registering] a generalized protest against the world.”<sup>46</sup> I do not regard this category as problematic for our purposes, although one wonders about the latently political qualities in anomic violence. Neither does *revolutionary* violence especially require our attention. Needler notes that it is generally directed toward “effecting a change of government” and that it may be further subdivided according to the scope of its aims, that is, whether the resisting group aspires to change “personnel only, or policy, or structural characteristics of the political system itself.”<sup>47</sup> *Representational* violence is the most interesting

<sup>45</sup> It is fashionable, if not entirely plausible, to flail Hegel for the distress of the German polity past and present; cf. especially Rudolf Wildenmann, *Macht und Konsens als Problem der Innen- und Aussenpolitik*, 2nd ed. (Cologne and Opladen, 1967), pp. 6–7. Perhaps West Germany needs a vacation from Hegel, in both his conservative and radical interpretations; but this does not mean that other countries cannot profit from self-examination in the light of Hegel's theory of the state.

<sup>46</sup> Martin Needler, *Political Development in Latin America: Instability, Violence, and Evolutionary Change* (New York, 1968), p. 47.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49. This tripartite classification, in various forms, has

category. This, Needler says, is apt to be found where the articulation of interests and aggregation are weak and fluctuating as a result of the fragility of intermediary structures.<sup>48</sup> Consequently, through violent action the aggrieved impose essentially representational demands upon the nation and its political leaders.

Needler uses the quaint language of "structural-functionalism," with a penchant for its new-found "developmental" bias. His prime example is from Ecuador. But I think it quite admissible to extend his categories to any political society suffering from strife that is not a direct challenge to central unity. I would argue that a sense of lack or loss of representation, especially in a polity with well-articulated representative institutions and intermediary channels, can in fact lead to this form of action. It is not a fundamental attack on the state, but rather a vivid appeal to the state outside of the authorized system for transmitting political claims. Strategically, the claim is for a redistribution of goods and resources. Symbolically, it is either for reallocation of representation or for structural changes in the representative system itself.

Anomic protest aside, I would further argue that the concept of representational violence helps us to understand the nature of much recent violence in the United States, where the extralegal claims of individuals may be caught up in the groups themselves, or where semiviolent movements may even aspire to become a regular part of the unofficial system of representation. Both "antinomian" and collective protest are obviously involved here.<sup>49</sup> This is the violence

---

had a fruitful career in modern political science. It seems to derive originally from a binary distinction by Aristotle (*Politics* 1301b), and is used in cognate senses by Easton, *Systems Analysis*, pp. 171-219, *passim*; by Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Boston, 1966), p. 141; and by James N. Rosenau, "Internal War as International Event," in *International Aspects of Civil Strife*, ed. J. N. Rosenau (Princeton, 1964), p. 63.

<sup>48</sup> Needler, *Political Development*, p. 47.

<sup>49</sup> For antinomianism and Hegel, see Nicholas Haines, "Politics and



not of Ecuador but a well-developed *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, and it is related to the concept of the state in an interesting way.

We might say that in the case of representational violence the observer's view of the state is fundamentally Hegelian. That is, it is implicitly conceded that the state is there to resolve the conflicts of civil society and to redistribute justice to the aggrieved in view of its higher purpose. It exists above the competitive strife in which the violent petitioners lie impacted. Disaffected groups then confront the government with violence not because *it* is the enemy, but because, being conscious that public authority possesses (and might enact) effective measures of redress, they wish to make authority vividly aware of their claims, to alarm or punish authority into accepting a more wholesome justice. To be sure, this sounds like a Hegelian state "from below." But quite opposed to this thesis is the vulgar Marxist doctrine of the state. Here the revolutionary is inspired not to punish or alarm the state, but to seize it and end it, inasmuch as public authority itself is regarded as the repository of a distilled and organized class violence.

To say that the appeal to a "Hegelian" state exists in America—that this is a way of describing conflict—is surely not to say that the American state *is* Hegelian or could ever become so. There is a manifest deviation from Hegel's prediction in *The Philosophy of History*. But that deviation does not impugn Hegel's shrewdness in foreseeing that civil society is a very complicated animal that requires a master. Neither does it foreclose the further question: Who shall that master be?

2. *The problem of the "universal class."* In his discussion of the relationship between the powers of the constitution, Hegel theorized a constitutional but nonparliamentary state which in some respects comes very close to resembling the

---

Protest: Hegel and Social Criticism," *Political Science Quarterly*, LXXXVI, 3 (September 1971), 415.

Second German Reich. In such a scheme, extraordinary qualities of performance are demanded of the "executive" (that is, the higher civil servants, "converging in their supreme heads who are in direct contact with the monarch")<sup>50</sup> and the ordinary bureaucracy (of which Hegel gives a description that in many ways seems to have inspired later German administrative theory). Since Hegel is antagonistic to the notion that a sphere of universality is created by the united legislative will of the people,<sup>51</sup> and since he has equally forsworn the solution of absolute rulership, the role of the executive becomes critical to his assertion that the state incorporates a higher purpose for the good of all.

It is obviously not enough merely to posit a "universal class" which, in the words of the philosopher, oversees "the maintenance of the state's universal interest, and of legality, in this sphere of particular rights [that is, the 'corporations,' municipal government, and the like], and the work of bringing these rights back to the universal";<sup>52</sup> it must further be shown how this class gains its aptitude for such a weighty responsibility. At least four different answers appear to be provided.

The first of these concerns the linkage of higher executive action to the more partial, natural, and immediate activity

<sup>50</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 289, p. 189.

<sup>51</sup> To be sure, in Hegel's theory the public is granted corporate representation through the estates; his constitution would be quite lopsided without this important stabilizer. But this is a representation of interests, not an instrument of the general will. Cf. Hegel's rather seathing comment in *Philosophy of Right*, para. 301A, p. 196: "If 'people' means a particular section of the citizens, then it means precisely that section which does *not* know what it wills. To know what one wills, and still more to know what the absolute will, Reason, wills is the fruit of profound apprehension and insight, precisely the things which are *not* popular." An earlier critic of this essay commented that I had neglected to mention Hegel's discussion of the legislature, public opinion (meaning in his time a few thousand people), etc. But I do not regard these issues as central here.

<sup>52</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 289, p. 189.

of the corporation: "The corporation mind, engendered when the particular spheres gain their title to rights, is now inwardly converted into the mind of the state, since it finds in the state the means of maintaining its particular ends."<sup>53</sup> But this is not a mere extension of the competitive "battle-field," as some society-over-state pluralist theories would imply. It is the exaltation of the corporation mind to a higher role where "the rooting of the particular in the universal" is totally validated.

In the second place, the manner of action and grasp of duties among the members of the executive are conditioned by a particular sort of "education in thought and ethical conduct," which produces a "dispassionate, upright, and polite demeanour."<sup>54</sup> The *Bildung* suggested here is obviously to be connected with the classical-cum-civic program of pedagogy that Hegel described and campaigned for in his rectorial addresses at the gymnasium of Nuremberg.<sup>55</sup> "Such an education," he continues, "is a mental counterpoise to the mechanical and semi-mechanical activity involved in acquiring the so-called 'sciences' of matters connected with administration, in the requisite business of training, in the actual work done, etc." In other words, the universality of the executive class would seem to depend on its cultivation of humanistic perspectives.

Third, Hegel commends the middle-class origins of the civil servants, with echoes of Aristotle in his argument. It is in the middle class that "the consciousness of right and the developed intelligence of the mass of the people is found."<sup>56</sup> Such a corps cannot tyrannize through its education and skill because it is bounded by the sovereign above and the local power of corporations below. Moreover: "The middle class, to which civil servants belong, is politically conscious and the one in which education is most prominent. For this

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 296, p. 193.

<sup>55</sup> See K. Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, pp. 290-294.

<sup>56</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 297, p. 193.



reason it is also the pillar of the state so far as honesty and intelligence are concerned."<sup>57</sup> Thus the themes of education and social origin are joined.

Fourth, the services of the executive are not "optional or discretionary." "Men shall forgo the selfish and capricious satisfaction of their subjective ends; by this very sacrifice, they acquire the right to find their satisfaction in, but only in, the dutiful discharge of their public functions."<sup>58</sup> This attitude is guaranteed partly by morale and training, as covered above, and partly by "their hierarchical organization and their answerability," as in Weber.<sup>59</sup> Thus the norms and structure of the executive itself contribute to its universal quality.

In the Hegelian analysis just provided, there are reinforcements and tensions between the criteria. How, for example, can the educated awareness that Hegel enjoins for the civil class contribute to its legal-rational dispassion or to its disposition to treat all equally according to universal justice? However we may try to answer these questions, it seems perfectly clear that Hegel placed equal emphasis on the structure of the universal class and on the inner ethical integrity of its agents, suggesting both their developed aptitude and the voluntary affinity of their goals with the majesty of the crown and the solidarity of the community. Perhaps the answer is to be found in Hegel's estimation of the effect of education (one quite alien to the "me nobody knows" attitude of contemporary America): "By educated men, we may *prima facie* understand those who without the obtrusion of personal idiosyncrasy can do what others do. . . . Bastard originality adopts eccentricities which only enter the heads of the uneducated."<sup>60</sup> But this scarcely

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, Z to para. 297, p. 291. Cf. *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, p. 257: "The strength of the government depends on the ability of this system . . . to be free and independent . . . as if it existed singly. . . ."

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 294, p. 191.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 295, p. 192.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, Z to para. 187, p. 268.

closes the issue. We are still left with the crucial function of the universal class in the Hegelian structure of politics.

At this point let us turn back to America. It need scarcely be remarked that little of what has been said above resonates within the American historical experience. The American ideology promotes—with its own selectiveness—the legislative will of the people. It attaches great importance to the executive, too, but it perceives its agents as dependent on a single powerful individual whose titles of authority are more like those of the Hegelian crown, and whose legitimacy rests more on the fact of popular investiture than on the structural quality of the office. Moreover, if not actually subject to cronyism or spoils system politics, the enormously distended American bureaucracy is still not guided by the insistent *vir integer* image that pervades Hegel's political writings. Although, as pointed out earlier, it is routinely expected that the ramifications of an American administration will cease to be "political" and commence to be "fair" beyond a certain point, or even (more speculatively) that politics *can* be fair, that a part (through party or partisan government) *can* represent the whole, this faith depends on the acceptance and routinization of quite different traditions. Finally, there is an *ad hoc* quality to the filling of executive roles in American practice, quite apart from the qualification of *Bildung*, that seems miles from the authorization of Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie*.<sup>61</sup>

But let us not belabor these obvious disparities between doctrine and practice. Let us instead ask whether current American trends are Hegelian in direction. Here I think the answer must be ambiguous, but in such a way as to account for the closure and exposure of American society commented on earlier. At least in view of the most critical national urgencies of the past generation—defense, economic

<sup>61</sup> Although Hegel grants the sovereign the last word in appointments under the rubric of "subjective aspect of election to office," he does not see arbitrariness as the norm (*ibid.*, para. 292, p. 191).

planning and forecasting, technological impact, race relations, and so forth—there is a discernible tendency to turn to the expert or to incorporate him (at least pragmatically) into the executive structure, and to allow his politics to supersede legislative politics to a considerable degree. The traditional “liberal expert” of American practice was, of course, the judge and not yet the technocrat, as befitted a society founded on the imperatives of proceduralism.<sup>62</sup> Today the judge has as yet lost little of his prominence, but he is increasingly viewed as an instrument of change—that is to say, a party to disputes as well as a referee. Though he partook in the past of certain attributes of American “universality,” we now have some sense that this role is being diminished or is passing into the technical bureaucracy. If this is so, we must inquire whether or in what sense a Hegelian universality is being cultivated and by what means it may be replacing the liberal and non-Hegelian ideology of earlier times. Obviously, these questions can only be proposed, not answered, in an essay of this kind.

However, before tackling the issues raised here, we might come at the question of universality from a slightly different direction. We might regard the concept of education as central to our concern, and we might take the allegations of the existence of an “American mandarinat,” based in part on the academy, as a point of departure for further inquiry.

To perform the parallel investigation properly, we must look beyond Hegel's qualification of the universal class to the context of his times and the genesis of his model. An interesting study of the ideological and sociological formation of the German “mandarinat” (whence came Dilthey, Scheler, Weber, Meinecke, and others) gives us some clues.<sup>63</sup> The beginnings of the phenomenon are clear: “Non-

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Walter Lippmann, *The Good Society* (New York, 1943), pp. 266–273.

<sup>63</sup> Fritz Ringer, *The German Mandarinate* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969).



nobles who sought an improved social position in eighteenth-century Germany began by getting as much education as they could afford. They then entered one of the state bureaucracies, the clergy, the teaching profession, or the fields of medicine and law, always on a subordinate level to begin with. Once installed in a learned profession, they naturally encouraged their offspring to make further advances along the same route.”<sup>64</sup> This is the base upon which the superstructure of German academic philosophy, law, theology, and science was erected. It is quite clear that Hegel's conception of the universal class was founded on an academic model, and that he saw no clear separation between the professoriat and other government functionaries. His correspondence with Altenstein regarding arrangements for his appointment to the chair of philosophy at Berlin is indicative of this relationship.<sup>65</sup> Thus it is the enlivening symbiosis of the academy and civil life that provides a key to the Hegelian notion of bureaucracy and the cultivation of the universal class.

Ringer advances the following paradigm for the ideology of the German mandarinat: (1) they regarded “rational philosophy” and humanistic education as indispensable to pure research and vastly superior to practical studies; (2) as advisers to the prince, and beneficiaries of his power through their status, they did not wish to see their states convulsed by popular republicanism; but on the other hand, (3) they opposed to the whims of the monarch the rights of reason, of considerable license of discussion and publication within their narrow ranks, and of the constitutional *Rechtsstaat*.<sup>66</sup> In short, it was in their interest to promote a higher intellectualism of limited access as the

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>65</sup> For these ten letters, exchanged between 1817 and 1822, see *Briefe von und an Hegel*, 4 vols., ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1956), II and III, *passim*. Cf. Avineri, “Labor, Alienation, and Social Classes,” p. 116.

<sup>66</sup> Ringer, *German Mandarinat*, pp. 7–25.

norm for civil service, and to regard themselves as universal mediators between the will of all and the temptations of the arbitrary use of princely power. Although the functions of government were comparatively crude in the eighteenth century, the decentralized multiplicity of German states insured a relative abundance of offices.

It is of course unjust to accuse these German intellectuals of merely consulting self-interest in their intricate theorizing of the state. Their *esprit* was less narrowly conceived than this, and their proposals were sufficiently diverse to exculpate them from mere caste determinism. Nevertheless, their "situation" and consciousness of themselves as a class add an important dimension to any comparison one might wish to make between their case and the origin and claims of a putative universal class in America.

The Americans are not the Germans, described by Kant as "the most easily and constantly governable people . . . inimical to novelty and to resisting the established order";<sup>67</sup> but there have been some intimations of pretensions to universalism among the present American intelligentsia, focusing on the liaison between the university and the federal executive. This linkage, most euphoric in the early 1960s, has subsequently been challenged by a counterintelligentsia which has deplored the connection as venal. Yet whether these critics are themselves "traditional intellectuals" (to use Gramsci's phrase),<sup>68</sup> cut off from literal power by their own ascesis and by the trends of society, or whether they are "organic intellectuals" *in embryo*, attached to some "new politics" that is destined to prevail, is far from clear. What is certain is that the intellectuals of universalizing pretensions (I use the word in its widest sense) who venture into the broader scene of contemporary America are bound, for

<sup>67</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Anthropologie*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, 24 vols. (Berlin, 1902-1964), VIII, 317-318.

<sup>68</sup> For an explication of Gramsci's use of this term in his *Quaderni del carcere*, see J.-M. Piotte, *La pensée politique de Gramsci* (Paris, 1970), pp. 45-70.

the present, to be partisan mandarins, more naturally the proponents of conflict in *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* than the dispassionate mediators and executors of anything resembling a Hegelian state.

3. *The problem of sovereign majesty.* In *The Philosophy of Right* Hegel speaks of "The Idea of something against which caprice is powerless, the 'majesty' of the monarch."<sup>69</sup> In a subsequent paragraph he explains that majesty is eclipsed when it is "dragged down into the sphere of argumentation," and goes on to discuss the hereditary institution of the monarchy. From this kind of argument it might be thought that Hegel had in mind some magnet-like splendor in the occupancy of the throne that would draw the factions of society toward a common allegiance. Indeed, there is some implication of this in Hegel's notions of "immediate individuality" and "natural character." Moreover, we should not neglect the hieratic pomps attaching to the idea of majesty (*maiestas*) as it proceeded out of the Middle Ages to give substance to the juristic notion of sovereignty. The Hegelian monarch is the "free universality . . . free from the knowing [that is, 'will'] of all . . . immediate [and] natural."<sup>70</sup> Just as the universal agents of Hegel's functionary class are presumably clothed in *Bildung*, so the sovereign's majesty might be considered something other than a mere place at the apex of the state.

Yet Hegel wrote no *Télémaque*, prophesied no Camelot. In a culture that produced much preposterous romanticizing on the subject (its *locus classicus* being the seductive portrayal of the royal couple in Novalis' *Christenheit oder Europa*, its satiric exhaustion contained in Thomas Mann's novel *Königliche Höheit*), Hegel is mute on the glories and beauties of princely life. The problem of the state is not a problem of "beautiful people." It is nothing more or less than the legal-political problem of the juristic source of the

<sup>69</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 281, p. 185.

<sup>70</sup> *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, p. 250.



unity of secular authority, transmitted to us from voluntarist philosophies by way of Hobbes and Rousseau into a context where the state is *vermittelt*, not directly apprehensible, and where civic solidarity is presumed to be organic and not explicable by doctrines of compact or consent. In such a state the need for the particularized willing agency (the unmoved mover)<sup>71</sup> is no less great, but the circumstances that promote that will and render it legitimate are more nebulous.<sup>72</sup> They are the product of history—a history, however, operating not from “immediate” loyalties of prescription but rather working deviously (*der Umweg*) toward the unfolding of the Idea.

Hegel has no illusions about the embodiment of sovereign majesty: “Monarchs are not exactly distinguished for bodily prowess or intellectual gifts, and yet millions submit to their rule.”<sup>73</sup> Yet the “‘I will’ must be pronounced by man himself”—even though that one man “is bound by the concrete decisions of his counsellors . . . [and] has often no more to do than sign his name.”<sup>74</sup> If the private character of the monarch becomes the determining factor in the stability of the state, this simply means that the state is defective.<sup>75</sup> Sovereignty, accordingly, is an office, divested of its traditional qualities of belovedness and charisma.

And yet, in the Hegelian theory of the state, it cannot be quite that simple. The reason for this is that the motivating will (become “thought” in the context of advice and counsel) is critical, but cannot be sustained and justified by any form of consent theory, however ingenious, unless one argues that the form of consent arises through the medium of thought, what is thought and has been thought correctly. As a consequence of this fact, majesty is either the com-

<sup>71</sup> Hegel's remarks in *Philosophy of Right*, para. 280A, p. 184.

<sup>72</sup> Hence Hegel's attack on elective monarchy and in general on the so-called *pactum subjectionis*, *ibid.*, para 281A, p. 186; also the remark on Napoleon, *ibid.*, Z to para. 281, p. 289.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, Z to para. 281, p. 289.      <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, Z to para. 279, p. 288.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, Z to para. 280, p. 289.

pression of all valid thought, "instrumental" and "immanent" in a political sense—which is barely conceivable—or else it is a symbol of the productive reciprocity between organized civil society and the interpenetrating agencies of state jurisdiction and state action. I believe that this latter notion furnishes the clue to the proper interpretation. Not only the necessity of sovereignty but its particular modern nature needs to be shown.

To understand this point, let us recall for the moment Kant's basically simple statement that he is able to conceive of an "ethical politician," but not a "political moralist."<sup>76</sup> Kant has in mind the notion that the statesman (the ultimate "willing" agent of the state) can and should universalize the maxim of his acts in the same sense as ordinary persons. Now we must remember that one of the deepest chasms between Kantian and Hegelian moral philosophy is that Hegel takes Kant's notion of "pure practical reason" and distributes it synthetically throughout the political community, its history, its culture, its reason, its acts. Hegel too wished for a moral politician, but he saw the question as arising from the intricate depths of society rather than from the "I choose" of the moral person: thus his sovereignty and its majesty are lawful as the source of decision, but that decision is never personal, always mediated by a care for the complex social body that these sustain. The "I will" is no less strong, but in a sense it is "given," not "chosen." "The personal majesty of the Monarch, . . . as the final *subjectivity* of decision, is above all answerability for acts of government,"<sup>77</sup> but that answerability is intended to be the consequence of an intimate "sense of society."

This conception allows Hegel to maintain that "taken without its monarch and the articulation of the whole which is the indispensable and direct concomitant of monarchy,

<sup>76</sup> Kant, "Perpetual Peace," in Beck, ed., *Kant on History*, p. 119.

<sup>77</sup> *Philosophy of Right*, para. 284, p. 187.

the people is a formless mass and no longer a state."<sup>78</sup> Sovereign majesty is therefore the symbol of the living community, above and beyond any mere "I will" derived from a *pactum subjectionis*. Yet it is not a monarchy of style, of love, of charisma.

Monarchical majesty is one of the concepts by which Hegel activates the notion of authority. Authority, as Hannah Arendt has explained in one of her most brilliant essays, means considerably more than we customarily signify when we speak of "public authorities" or "the authority of an expert."<sup>79</sup> It means collective faith in the foundations or fundamental principles of a state and the capacity to translate this faith into leadership, political virtue, and public confidence. Authority is not power; it does not inhere in persons or even exclusively in role-playing persons. It is a subjective sensing of an objective pattern of relations built on social confidence.<sup>80</sup> This is the type of relationship that Hegel's sovereign is intended to cement. There have been moments, especially in periods of crisis, when the American presidency took on attributes of this kind. But there is legitimate doubt today, even amid the "sovereign" accretions of the presidential power, whether a cohesive majesty inheres in that office.

Again, I must specify my awareness that the development of the American presidency did not take place along Hegelian lines. Thus it is historically improbable that America would engage in a Hegelian debate over the presidency. Yet we can honestly observe a number of themes not too far divorced from our earlier discussion. The first, of course,

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 279A, p. 183.

<sup>79</sup> H. Arendt, "What is Authority?" in *Between Past and Future*, pp. 91-141.

<sup>80</sup> Hence Hegel's "cool" definition of patriotism as "the sentiment which, in the relationships of our daily life and under ordinary conditions, habitually recognizes that the community is one's substantive groundwork and end." "Hot" patriotism is the property of those who would "rather be magnanimous than law-abiding." *Philosophy of Right*, para. 268, p. 164.



is the symbolic and integrating aura of the office, its presumed capacity in a divided liberal constitution to stand forth on behalf of all the people. But as opposed to the Hegelian sovereign, the American president seems both too powerful and too partisan to perform this function, especially in an increasingly cramped and conflict-ridden *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*. For one thing, he is at once head of state and party leader. For another, he is both crown and executive, with all the attendant overlapping and inconsistency, particularly as the powers of each function have come to be distributed in modern government. His sovereign "I will" is neutralized in theory; in practice, it is either inhibited by the actual play between the separated powers of government, or regarded as odious by a part of the public on grounds of partisanship. Moreover, the "majesty" of the office is increasingly taken to depend on the private resources of the occupant—his inspirational qualities, his tough Machiavellian substance, or both. He is called upon to preside over what is in many ways a completed *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* groping for a regulative state form. But he is constitutionally ill-equipped to embody neutrality, except as it is reflected in shifting coalitions of political necessity.

Thus it is no wonder that the battle over the division of powers is reviving with intensity in contemporary America, or that expert opinion is split over the issues of presidential term and tenure.<sup>81</sup> It may even be expected, given present trends, that the nature and purpose of the office will eventually be reexamined. For public authority and the independent majesty of government are very much at stake in this country, not simply because of the corrosive power of group and elite analysis, but more basically because symbols and mute acceptances of the past have ceased to provide needed solidarity in the present age of heightened *bürger-*

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, the report on the U.S. Senate subcommittee hearings on the presidency, *Boston Sunday Globe*, 31 October 1971.

*liche Gesellschaft*. This is not—for historical reasons—a problem that Hegel can help us solve, but it is one that gives us cause to meditate seriously on his analysis.

There are, in effect, three competing notions of public authority that are relevant to current predicaments. The first, the liberal thesis, states that public authority is there to facilitate the more or less free transactions of society, rather like a patrolman directing the flow of traffic. To the extent that circumstances have brought this view under attack, its credibility is greatly diminished. The second thesis, the Marxist or elitist, is that political authority is there to routinize the domination of one part of society over another through the application of coercive force and the transmission of a public ideology. Marxism transcends this view by apocalypse; otherwise it can lead to the deepest cynicism. A third thesis, shared by Hegel, is that political authority is there to amplify and sustain the solidarity of a people by acting as a focal point of reverence and by superseding particular wills and interests. It remains to be seen how far and in what form such an interpretation of the state can help to salvage a public morale that is becoming equally skeptical of nonintervention, apocalypse, and live-and-let-live cynicism. One suspects that most modern political societies depend on an alternation between all three of these interpretations, cloaking the other two protectively when one is uppermost. However, there would seem to be a persistent need for the notion of an instrumental and immanent state, beyond the clarifications and satisfactions that the other doctrines would provide. This need is incidentally no less pressing in the underdeveloped countries than it is in the peculiarly developed ones, like America. Hegel is scarcely the royal road to political truth, especially for nations that diverged at an early stage of their career from the traditions he embodies. But his scheme of analysis cannot fail to serve as a point of reference wherever public authority has become a questionable ethical commodity. Beyond this, he points toward the problem of

regulating a community designed to heighten the quality of what is thought, experienced, created. And he can even stimulate political theorists to the contemplation of new forms by jolting their sensibilities. Whenever one comes to feel that the loneliness of mental retrieval is poor compensation for the poignancy of what is past, the urge to understand can promote a will to create. Yet to be amid the archives is never quite the same as to be on the barricades.



## HEGEL AND "THE PRESENT STANDPOINT"

IF Hegel has not literally been to the barricades of strife-ridden cities or explosive rural *focos*, he has been in the thick of current ideological combat. For the past thirty years elements of Hegelianism have been appropriated piecemeal into some of our regnant philosophies, or have at least served as a screen of filtration through which the present world is interpreted, and even acted upon. Never has Hegel's bust sat so high in the pantheon of Western sages. Although any root-and-branch renewal of Hegelian system-building in contemporary philosophy is unimaginable, one can no longer take the thought of the Swabian master "exactly as he pleases." Canons of interpretation, inspired in part by retrospective scholarship, in part by new assessments of the human predicament, have subtly conditioned our response to Hegel's role in the bacchanale of modern Western culture and its confrontations with a wider environment. To many, Hegel seems more a polestar than a bypassed milestone in the history of thought.

Thus it would be mindless to argue the issue of whether Hegelianism can or cannot be used in staking out new enterprises. The more interesting inquiry concerns the nature of these adaptations and their fidelity to the intellectual source. Such an inquiry could lead in many directions, but my present aim will be to examine some contemporary ideas about history and politics in the light of what I believe to have been Hegel's own theoretical coherence. The pursuit of this issue is, in fact, central to Hegel's own design, for he admitted no conceptual rupture between "actuality" and

the mind that comprehends it, and was also, in the deepest sense, a philosopher of time.

Hegel's philosophy required that truth be revealed as historically intelligible, just as Plato's required that it be timeless and transcendent, and Descartes's that it be axiomatic, clear, and distinct. But Hegel does not find truth precisely in the flux or the perishable; his thesis is a dialectic of time and eternity, in which the latter cannot escape from, but remains distinct from, the former.<sup>1</sup> Not everything, in the words of *Faust*, that comes to birth “deserves to perish wretchedly.” The prime achievements of spirit (ambiguously human and divine) in the course of the world are retained in the philosopher's insight and memory in systematic form, and are made available to men in the present age through the understanding and sensing of a long stream of culture.

This “history of freedom” (meaning essentially, in the idiom of German idealism, the mind's liberation from perplexity when confronted by alien objects and situations, and its extension, as will, into rational acts) requires philosophical interpretation. It is neither annalistic and empirical, nor is it naively *a priori*.<sup>2</sup> If any order is to be extracted from the chaos, it needs the assumption or principle that rational beings participate in and contribute to a rational world, and that rational minds, by processes they do not themselves completely grasp in moments of action, insure that the governance of the world is not a joke or an Epicurean nonsense. Reason, as it appears in human accom-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel*, ed. Raymond Queneau (Paris, 1947), pp. 364–380; and A. Kojève, *Essai d'une histoire raisonnée de la philosophie païenne*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1968–1972), I, 143–144, 155–162.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, tr. J. Sibree (New York, 1956), p. 11. Hegel derides the apriorism of writers like F. Schlegel and Fichte; as for empiricism, he adds: “the first condition to be observed [is] that we should faithfully adopt all that is historical.”

plishments, is the guarantee of God. Hegel does not say, like Kant, that in order to nourish one's individual moral self, one is bound to look at the world this way and strive to accomplish a purpose consisting in the result of the purification of each one's will and thus the hypothetical unity of every moral will in a "kingdom of ends." He does say, however, that, willy-nilly, each free individual is the partaker in a purpose set by reason and discoverable through philosophy. Philosophy does not conceive its task in the dark, but in the light of event; "it is only an inference from the history of the world that its development has been a rational process."<sup>3</sup>

Hegel was not abashed to call his interpretation a "theodicy"—the justification of the ways of God to man. As he makes clear in his exposition of "philosophical" history in the introduction to the lectures, this theodicy is of a particular order. It is the dialectical fusion of two elements, each of which in itself is inadequate to a speculative comprehension of the world. The first of these is the principle that the natural order is organized by autonomously reasonable principles, an insight which Hegel, *via* Aristotle, assigns to Anaxagoras.<sup>4</sup> However, the mere conception of nature as a totality under laws is incomplete, because our understanding of the world remains "a truth limited to an *abstract* form" without "determinate application and concrete development," that is, without self-developing spirit. This deficiency is somewhat remedied by the Christian view, dynamic in its own sense, that "a Providence (that of God) presides over the events of the world . . . [for] *divine* Providence is wisdom, endowed with an infinite power which realizes its aim, viz., the absolute rational design of the world." However, this view is still stubbornly opaque to the concrete demands of reason, since it shrouds from view even the Anaxagorean aspiration to intelligibility and "denies the possibility of discerning the plan of Providence."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> This and following citations *ibid.*, pp. 11–16.



Hegel's notion is that rational intelligibility is shared out among all that is divine in the human; that although not partaking of the deficiency of temporality, it appears in time and nowhere else; that concrete human events, especially as politically organized, are not simply ambiguous clues to an ultimately veiled mystery, but, when philosophically interpreted, are veridical benchmarks to the meaning of the collective human project. The historicity of Hegel's approach compels him to recognize that the development of the spirit in human time is commensurate with spirit's understanding of its own evolution and destiny through the thoughts, works, and acts of men. Neither Anaxagoras nor Augustine had been able to solve the riddle. But "the time must eventually come for understanding that rich product of active reason which the history of the world offers to us."<sup>5</sup>

Cat and mouse? Shall we say unabashedly, with Kojève, that Hegel + Napoleon = Logos = Completed Philosophical Understanding = *Ende der Geschichte*?<sup>6</sup> Is history for Hegel essentially analogous to what, in a famous passage, "pre-history" was for Marx? It would be more correct to say that through his ambiguous retention of the Christian metaphor of "last things," Hegel appears to close the course of the world to all concrete development when he means only to close it to current philosophical understanding, while yet yoking its future to an ultimate meaning that has been deciphered through the revelation that world history consists of spirit's mission "to make itself *actually* that which it is *potentially*."<sup>7</sup> To make the knowledge of the world both immanent and speculative in this way forecloses neither the temporality of the process nor the empirical addition of significantly new, though philosophically comprehensible, event.

Moreover, the collective history of man's political forms

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> A. Kojève, *Lecture de Hegel*, pp. 147-148, 153-154.

<sup>7</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 17.

(which Hegel calls "objective spirit") is not the last word; for "the spirit is the unity of what is understood and the understanding person. . . . The subjective spirit is the active, but the objective spirit is itself this activity. . . ." <sup>8</sup> So conceived, the history of philosophy is the most profound record of man. And "political history has to be carefully distinguished from the history of philosophy. . . . When the history of philosophy has to tell of deeds in history, we must first ask what a deed in philosophy is, and whether any particular thing is philosophic or not." <sup>9</sup> World history enables; the progress of philosophy coronates. "A long time is undoubtedly required by spirit in working out philosophy . . . like the immensity of the space spoken of in astronomy. . . . [But] it has time enough just because it is itself outside of time, because it is eternal. . . . We ought to feel no disappointment that particular kinds of knowledge cannot yet be attained, or that this or that is still absent. In the history of the world progression is slow." <sup>10</sup>

Hegelian philosophy presents a conundrum, which may be expressed thus: Philosophy, or wisdom, whose significance is eternal, can be elucidated only by means of its historical expression. Yet philosophy, not history, is queen of the sciences. We shall not see world history as self-justifying, but only according to a rationality that the philosophical result can bring to bear on its process. And yet, to argue the opposite, philosophy is the captive of a history that forces it to emerge from the insights of separate and successive civilizations and will never let it stand still. The philosopher seeks an Archimedian platform, but remains a participant in the flux and a partisan in the conflict. History seems always to abolish philosophy. Thus, according to Hegel, the historical movement of the spirit joins the eternal in "absolute spirit," the highest manifestations of culture. But for an activist, malcontent with Hegel's paradox, like

<sup>8</sup> E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson, ed. and tr., *Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 3 vols., reprint (London, 1955), I, 72-73.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

the young Georg Lukács, “history is much too much the natural and indeed the uniquely possible life-element of the dialectical method for such an enterprise to succeed. . . . [It] intrudes illogically but inescapably into the structure of those very spheres which according to the system were supposed to be beyond its range.”<sup>11</sup>

In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel elucidated a system of law, morality, politics, and community that was ambiguously historical and transhistorical, a motion of history mediated by the logical necessity of the motion of rational will. Before returning to more general problems of the philosophy of history, we can profitably dwell on a few aspects of Hegel’s accomplishment. For his philosophy of the state, paradoxically, can still speak to us in peculiar ways. That theory is detachable from Hegel’s general historical vision in certain respects, even though the result of this separation will not be true Hegelianism. The theory asserts, *inter alia*, the natural bonds of community, based on such intermediary organs as the family, municipal politics, and organized corporate interest groups, all as mediated and maintained in motion by a comprehending class of upright executants. There are social welfare overtones to this state, as well as a conflation of politics with administration (as had been compatible with earlier cameralist theory, was reasserted in the Napoleonic order, and has appeared powerfully, in various forms, in the so-called “advanced industrial society” of our own time). Similarly—very much in the manner of Benjamin Constant’s “pouvoir neutre”—Hegel sees the need for a monarch or sovereign will that stands for the impartiality and solidarity that government is obliged to bring to the competitive subordinate arrangements of society.

The history of the “demystification” of the Hegelian “metaphysical state” from young Marx to Hobhouse and beyond is well known; but the fact remains that even if the presen-

<sup>11</sup> Georg Lukács, “Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat,” in *History and Class Consciousness*, tr. Rodney Livingston (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 147.



tation as well as the *telos* is metaphysical, Hegel's state may also be supremely functional under certain given conditions. It is assuredly not the *ne plus ultra* of the prevailing traditions in modern Western thought: liberalism snipes at its ambiguous authoritarianism and its quaint notion of liberty, which is certainly not "doing everything that the laws allow"; Jacobinism dislikes its moderated pluralism and anti-populism; Marxism derides its pretensions toward impartiality and justice, given the social system out of which it had been confected. To some it has seemed a monster; to others a pedantic irrelevancy.

There is not room to explore these claims or to attempt any rejustification of Hegel's politics in times and climates very different from his own. I shall simply put three unanswered, perhaps unanswerable, questions: (1) Under present conditions, does the model of competitive or conflictual society provide an adequate basis for needed political therapy, let alone the encouragement of what is best in human beings? (2) Is it simply delusion and ideology to conceive of or aspire to the rule of wisdom and impartiality in politics, or must all government simply be either class-dominant or the temporary resultant of the complex play of social forces? Further, can political units allow themselves the luxury of so regarding the state? (3) In a day when many perceive the desuetude, if not the collapse, of political forms and attitudes (for instance, parliamentarism) dear to tradition and anchored in sentiment, would it not be the better part of prudence to consider dignified alternatives, rather than just bewailing the deluge or papering over our cherished theories and institutions with deceits leading to the worst kinds of corruption and hypocrisy? What the Hegelian analysis asks us, in effect, is: isn't it time to get down to the business of having a real state instead of dreaming it away into an aimless libertarianism or cringing at its cultivation of all the worst habits of its preceptor, civil society?

Curiously enough, the problematic of these questions

falls, in our present age, on both well-established and weakly established systems of government, on old and new countries alike. In the former case,<sup>12</sup> there are reasons to think that a complex and ill-organized civil society has outreached all the restraints of general interest that the existence of a valid state could bring to bear on the situation. And the prospects, especially in the United States, are for further delapidation rather than improvement, given the scope of injuries committed against state-mindedness by the highest state authorities themselves in the past several years. Similar, if not so vivid, evidences of decay are appearing in other liberal-constitutional countries.

In the latter case, one has not only to deal with the problem of “modernization” (see ahead) and with the mixture of imported and native forms, but also with the necessity of building a state from meager materials, where a sense of the nation may not exist. Africa is perhaps the continent where this urgency is most perplexing, although Hegelian politics has something to say also to parts of Latin America, to countries where a “sense of the state” exists but has been continually plundered by generations of political freebooters. When, for example, Sékou Touré rebuffs Western liberalism, but writes that “the life of a society is governed by habits, customs, historic traditions, and the necessity for its maintenance and development,”<sup>13</sup> one immediately senses the relevance of the *Philosophy of Right*. “In three or four years,” according to Touré, writing in 1959, “no one will think any longer of the tribal, ethnic, and religious rivalries that have in the past caused so much evil.”<sup>14</sup> No doubt this was exaggerated optimism; but Hegel’s politics could have provided solid clues toward the achievement of Guinean unity. Similarly, Nyerere’s desire to create a civic education for Tan-

<sup>12</sup> See Chapter Seven.

<sup>13</sup> Paul E. Sigmund, ed., *The Ideologies of the Developing Nations*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1972), p. 229.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

zanian youth in a public, and yet not idiosyncratic, way appears to have parallels with the kind of thing Hegel sought when he was rector of a Hochschule in Nuremberg.<sup>15</sup>

It is true, though, that Third World leaders are not inclined to assimilate the lessons of Hegel in their original form. If Hegel has meant anything at all to them, it is by way of a Left Hegelian tradition that provides good rhetoric but little concrete understanding of the conditions of state building. As the late Kwame Nkrumah has written: "I read Hegel, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Mazzini. The writings of these men did much to influence my revolutionary ideas."<sup>16</sup> There can be little doubt that Nkrumah and others failed to sense that they might tap the wisdom of a thinker whose revolutionary implications were, in the last analysis, subordinate to the more difficult task of theorizing the harmonious political community. But it seems fairly clear that, outside any "metaphysics" of the "objective spirit" in world history, Hegel's state philosophy may respond more directly to the political needs of the new countries than either Marxism or liberalism, even while it raises somewhat different questions about the refurbishment of our own institutions and morale.

The theoretical application of aspects of Hegelianism to modern quandaries of state building or state maintenance may be faithful to Hegel's implicit sociology; but neither this nor malleable adaptations of the dialectic correspond to the intentions of his philosophical system. After Hegel, philosophy as *system* is progressively despised, (1) because its claims to truth in a world now intelligible only according to concrete clusters of human events and no longer according to some constant rationality seem vain and transient, and (2) because such claims are "ideological," since they dupe men into "freezing" a process that ought not to be halted, and perpetuate the interests of the powerful. This

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.



is the “philosophy” that Marxist thought renders *aufgehoben* in the concrete, mundane activity of the proletariat and the guidance of its social science.

Thus the famous post-Hegelian dyslogism of “system” versus “dialectic,” or “metaphysics” versus “methodology,” is posed. Philosophy is not so much overcome as lobotomized. In the words of Jacques d’Hondt, a contemporary Hegelo-Marxist, we can envisage the “appropriation of the part of the Hegelian body that is still alive. It can be given a new heart, or a new soul . . . and in the new meeting of parts, it will feel roused again.”<sup>17</sup> In this process the history of the world, as Hegel conceived it, is cast in doubt or radically transfigured for purposes that stress another kind of goal, another form of liberation. To use Hegelian language, the “result” can no longer contain the elements of its “becoming”; it continually exceeds them in a way that is transcendently human and reminiscent, in its way, not of a Hegel, but of a Fichte “stood on his feet.” For the mnemonic achievements of absolute spirit is substituted the “tomorrow” of absolute humanity. Hegelianism, to take up once again the words of Lukács, has not managed “to do more than provide a complete intellectual copy and the *a priori* deduction of bourgeois society.”<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the proletariat, in furthering its own class aims, “simultaneously achieves the conscious realisation of the—objective—aims of society.”<sup>19</sup> The dialectic destroys system by displacing its irrepressible energy from the task of understanding culture as a past creation to the mission of creating an understanding for the abolition of exploitative subcultures. This Marxian move, according to Hannah Arendt, also achieves the conditions for the abolition of political philosophy as it was originally conceived.<sup>20</sup> The new world of dialectical energy

<sup>17</sup> Jacques d’Hondt, *De Hegel à Marx* (Paris, 1972), p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> G. Lukács, “Reification,” p. 148.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>20</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York, 1968), pp. 16–21.

is also a world of collective suspicion, where the appropriation of the truth becomes a competitive and porous enterprise.

The crux of the separation of dialectic from system is not just the "demystification" of the Hegelian concept of the state, but the abandonment of Hegel's notion of world history, begun under the auspices of those—atheist, radical, or nationalistic—who saw the philosophy of history as projective rather than consummative, hortatory rather than justificatory. At the same time that the "speculative" adequacy of Christianity as a world-historical explanation of human destiny was being denied by Hegel's successors, similar criticisms were being lodged against the role of the "modern state" in the creation of culture through historical process, against the thesis that new cultures were forbidden to enter the historical arena as bearers of higher principles, and against the idea that modes of progressive activity were aspects of a prefigured, Europocentric destiny.

The obsolescence—if this is the correct word—of Hegel's philosophy of history, and with it the coherence of the entire philosophical architecture that he had labored at least thirty years to build, can be envisaged in a number of ways. In commenting on some of the ones most germane to our topic, there seems no need to burden the reader with a *précis* of that philosophy of history—the fact that its "sun rises in the East and sets in the West," that it includes an inventory of four civilizational components, that it is involved with the idea of the expansion of freedom, that political change is the vital carrier of cultural advance, that subjective and collective acts constitute its "warp and woof," that the progress of "Germanic" civilization completes the development of self-consciousness in its emergence from absolute negativity to the grasp of truth, and so forth. Rather, it seems more important to emphasize the following qualities:

1. The Hegelian philosophy of history repeats and encloses the Hegelian philosophy of the state—and, by im-

plication, the Hegelian moral philosophy as well—just as the philosophy of the state mediates between the principles of right and morality and the objective course of the world. Thus the one is basically inexplicable without the other.

2. As a corollary of the above, although it is conceivable to endorse or criticize Hegel’s philosophy of the state as a self-enclosed whole or to view human spiritual development in historical time as a process in which entities other than states provide the vital momentum, it is contrary to Hegel’s method to allow this separation.

3. Neither *raison d’état* nor the collective manifestation of these *Volksgeister* in universal history constitutes human meaning or an end in itself. Rather, they are instrumental to what is highest and best and cumulatively significant in human culture and self-understanding, and in this sense they subserve philosophy.

4. The “result” of philosophy has its own “becoming,” just as the Idea of the state is composed of its particular development. To say that each is, in its way, “historical” is not to say that the essence of human achievement can be conflated into political history—even as philosophically interpreted. Neither, though, will it be intelligible without that history or the general motion of history *per se*.

5. Within the philosophical understanding of political history itself, the ground rules are far from simple. In the first place, there is no simple choice to make between the deduction of the meaning of history from any transcendent *a priori*, and the laborious extraction of meaning from the arrangements of particular events. Presumably, to use one of Hegel’s favorite images, one penetrates the “circle” of wisdom by means of a principle—the expansion of freedom—that reconciles the two approaches. Second, although the natural momentum of history is carried forward by political action—lawgiving, war, conquest, the rise and fall of governments, and so on—its wider spiritual motion is pertinent to units of civilization. Thus, when Avineri, in the face of this perplexity, writes that “*Volk* . . . does not imply the



emergence of a unitary state, let alone a nation-state, nor is the dominance of any given *Volksgeist* reducible to its political power,"<sup>21</sup> I think he fails to discern the intermediary role which wider cultures fulfill in Hegel's scheme between the primary elements of force and change and the universal qualities of spirit. As I have indicated elsewhere, politics is "immediate" and "natural" in world history, but it does not directly establish the result.<sup>22</sup> Finally, world history or the realm of "objective spirit" has both its subjective and objective components, just as we might say correspondingly that "phenomenology" is closely tied up with "objective" events and values.

6. World history is, then, for Hegel the arena where the self-conscious spirit strives for and achieves truth and reconciliation in a culture enabled by politics and through a politics justified by philosophical insight.<sup>23</sup> It presumes to solve the purposive question: what is the world's rational meaning based on possible human evidence?—not a submission to meaninglessness, relativity, naturalism, or utopian ponderings. It is not history that stops when this evidence is in hand and accepted, so much as the fear of the dark experienced in the caverns of human time. Tragedy or comedy? Tragedy, surely, in the sense that history is a record of slaughter and not much happiness. Comedy, perhaps, divine and human, if our reason assures us that spirit's purposes are served after their labyrinthine unfolding. Some irony, too: spirit makes its history, *our* history, by the use of unwitting human foils; and even the beautiful and best (such as Periclean Athens) runs against its intentions (the expansion of freedom). Epic, finally: especially the homecoming of Odysseus and the sober experience of Aeneas that sacrifice of one's person is the inevitable lot of the political

<sup>21</sup> Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 222.

<sup>22</sup> See above, pp. 185–186.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, tr. and ed. T. M. Knox (Oxford, 1962), para. 353, p. 220.

architect. Or, as Hegel wrote about Napoleon: “It is an immense spectacle to see a mighty genius destroy himself.”<sup>24</sup>

We do share with Hegel the notion, which had quickened to a second nature in the era surrounding the French Revolution, of our captivity in a process of time that drags us along, throwing up considerable political debris in its wake. Hegel did not, of course, curse this process; at moments he hailed it, as in 1806: “We confront an important epoch, a time of ferment, when spirit is leaping ahead, outgrowing its previous shape and taking on a new one.”<sup>25</sup> Such openings to the future can be quite bracing; on the other hand, they can inspire terror and bewilderment if the analytic mind cannot fathom purpose in the eye of the storm or devise controls. As Chateaubriand wrote in 1797 of his experience: “No one can be guaranteed a moment of peace. We navigate along an unknown coast, amid shadows and tempest. Thus, it is in everyone’s personal interest to reflect on these questions with me, because his existence is implicated.”<sup>26</sup> Hegel attempted to decant his knowledge of spiritual navigation. For this purpose he philosophically expanded the religious category of spirit (*Geist*) and invented a totally new philosophy of time. That philosophy was a mediation between striving and fulfillment, will and mind, which retained both eschatological elements and the pagan sense of the submission of the world to law. As we have seen, politics, as the science of what is collectively thought, and philosophy, which is the only nurse of a responsible politics, gain a new and necessary relationship in the modern age of memory and speculation.

If much of our mood is the same, however, the intellec-

<sup>24</sup> Hegel to Niethammer, 29 April 1814, *Briefe von und an Hegel*, 4 vols., ed. J. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1952–1960), II, 28.

<sup>25</sup> *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Stuttgart, 1936), p. 352.

<sup>26</sup> François-René de Chateaubriand, *Essai historique, politique et moral sur les révolutions anciennes et modernes* (London, 1826), p. 4.

tual tools and mental biases are different. "System" may remain a conservative or preservative element, but it is monochronic and shuns the totalizing vigor of dialectic. And dialectics survives in bursts of frustrated energy. In a radically "open" philosophical world, where man is bereft from his "meaning," where the "result" of his becoming is illusory or hidden, and where activity is incessantly involved with a fatiguing immediacy of choice, dialectics is a capacious way of explaining successions of acts whose logic is not straightforward. But that is simply a psychological context—conditioned by the contingency of structures and values—in which modern man is compelled to lead an institutional life and define its future *à travers* his own technological cleverness and moral opacity. As Raymond Aron writes: "Modern societies are the first ever to justify themselves by their future, the first in which the motto 'Man is the future of man' appears not so much blasphemous as banal."<sup>27</sup> Be it blasphemy or banality, the notion cloaks a remarkable irony. For even if man is convinced of being his own future, he has never been less certain of the privileged credentials of his anthropology.

In such circumstances, optimists and activists—who must not be ridiculed, for they leaven the soggy dough of cynicism and despair—frequently find meaning in the Hegelian dialectic, especially in its significant attribute of "negativity," when it is shorn of all its dubious connections with the totalization and justification of existing culture. Since Lukács this has been a major motto of the Hegelianizing Left. As Marcuse neatly puts it: "the method . . . that operated in [Hegel's] system reached farther than the concepts that brought it to a conclusion."<sup>28</sup> An arresting chapter of a new book by the unorthodox revolutionary Marxist Raya Dunaevskaya is entitled "Why Hegel? Why Now?" These questions are broadly answered in the following manner: "No

<sup>27</sup> Raymond Aron, *The Industrial Society: Three Essays on Ideology and Development* (New York, 1968), p. 15.

<sup>28</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (Boston, 1960), p. 257.



matter what Hegel's own intentions . . . how could he have stopped the ceaseless motion of the dialectic just because his pen reached the end of his *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*?”<sup>29</sup> This writer, who finds even Mao's “cultural revolution” deficient in the full utilization of Hegel, opts decisively against the interpretation of Hegel that I have been exploring. For the complex linkage of culture, politics, and philosophy within the matrix of “absolute Idea,” Mme Dunayevskaya proposes to substitute an unchained dialectic, which she baptises “Absolute Method,” a method that “becomes irresistible . . . because our hunger for theory arises from the totality of the present global crisis.”<sup>30</sup> To the question I have raised about the contemporaneity of Hegel, she answers with a resounding affirmative: “What makes Hegel a contemporary is what made him so alive to Marx: the cogency of the dialectic of negativity for a period of proletarian revolution, as well as for the ‘birth-time’ of history in which Hegel lived.”<sup>31</sup> According to Mme Dunayevskaya, “Hegel moved from ‘culture’ to ‘science,’ i.e. the unity of history and its philosophical comprehension.”<sup>32</sup> It remained, then, only for Marx to demonstrate that action itself, surpassing thought, must be called on to reconstruct society and “realize” philosophy. However, Hegel felt his philosophy to be supremely valid precisely because it preserved and clarified culture in the memory, not because it had supplanted it.<sup>33</sup> Hegel told us not so much what we lack as what we have so tortuously acquired; how it constitutes *us*, not our latitude in rejecting it or turning it to other purposes. Thus, when our author concludes “that Hegel's tendencies in the summation of the past give us a glimpse of the future, especially when materialistically understood

<sup>29</sup> Raya Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution* (New York, 1973), p. 6.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 286.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Hegel to Niethammer, 28 October 1808, *Briefe*, I, 253: “Every day I am more convinced that theoretical work brings more to pass in the world than practical work. Once the realm of thought is revolutionized reality can scarcely hold out.”

in a Marxist-Humanist, not vulgar economist, manner,"<sup>34</sup> we recognize the partial aspect of Hegel she is appropriating, and we discern her strategic position in the intramural Marxist debate, but we find her judgment of the links between philosophy, history, politics, and culture alien to Hegel's intent.

Despite a quite widespread acknowledgment today that Marx revised his strategy of the proletarian revolution a number of times in connection with his observations of history and social life,<sup>35</sup> Marxism tended to become riveted to deterministic axioms which, "materialistic" though they might be, lacked even the nuance and suppleness of Hegel's "history of the world spirit," provided that the work of that spirit could serve a progressive dialectic. Marx had admired Hegel: it now became the turn of Marxist intellectuals to discover in Hegel (despite his reputation as a Prussian conservative) a liberation of the philosophical spirit which "scientific socialism" had chained down in dismal prisons of the "industrial fact." It is perhaps not too much to say that the renewed interest in Hegel catered to the appetites of a brilliant *déclassé* intelligentsia who wished for a larger "piece of the action" in the advancement of world history than the "self-consciousness of the proletariat" afforded them.

Also, despite prominent successes, practical Marxism revealed its own discords, deceits, and disappointments: it, too, was finally unable to confront history from a coherent philosophical standpoint. Its disputants charged each other with political betrayal, or, on more speculative grounds, with slippage into the bogs of positivism or of "bourgeois dialectic." Even though Hegel had at times been canonized by official Marxism (especially following Engels) as a kind of bourgeois John the Baptist, and accorded a laudatory *nunc dimittis* by the pontiffs of socialism, he now emerged

<sup>34</sup> Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 287.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. David Fernbach, ed., *Karl Marx: The Revolutions of 1848* (Harmondsworth, 1973), esp. pp. 33-38.

in new guise as the dialectical expositor of problems that had arisen within Marxist world history, whose consummation, if dramatically indicated here and there, had also been laggard and nonconformist. To quote Dunayevskaya once more: “The [Hegelian] dialectic disclosed that the counter-revolution is *within* the revolution. It is the greatest challenge man has ever had to face.”<sup>36</sup> This is, indeed, the idiom of Arno J. Mayer’s interesting study, which acknowledges no debt to reinterpreted Hegelianism but relates to it from the outset: “Counterrevolution is closely interlocked with revolution. In fact the two are symbiotically related. To concede the historical reality of the one is to concede the historical reality of the other.”<sup>37</sup> Dialectic, understood as much in the realm of ideas as in the sphere of brute economic forces, becomes both the symbol of a combat whose outcome is no longer clarified by faith in “science” or confidence in the triumph of the good (heirlooms of the Enlightenment), and a measure of pessimism born from the suspicion that although right and wrong exist, the world is meaningless. Heroic progressivism tweaks history to see if it will dance to the right tune; but it grows disgruntled, and becomes disproportionately existential, distrustful, and eventually Epicurean, seeking *ataraxia* outside of politics.

In point of fact, dialectic, like any purposive intellectual tool, always has the propensity to recreate system, because, however witless and impulsive or sacrificial and despairing may be the actions of men, mind cannot endure in the void of radical “openness” and must compel actions to conform to the pursuit of aspects of present reality. Thus it generally proves to be with “modern” Hegelianism more or less tailored to the Marxist vision of destiny. “In this transformation,” writes d’Hondt, the old philosophy “is entirely reorganized around a new core, but without its original structure being forgotten. For ideas, death is only transfig-

<sup>36</sup> Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 287.

<sup>37</sup> Arno J. Mayer, *Dynamics of Counterrevolution in Europe, 1870–1956: An Analytic Framework* (New York, 1971), p. 9.



uration. . . . The absolute Idea becomes an illusion that nevertheless must be recognized."<sup>38</sup> If we have chosen the dialectic and placed our bets against the system, the latter may still come back to haunt us. Hegel can be used vicariously to explain both Hegelianism and its Marxist succession in world history; the capacities of the systematic philosophy, if stretched to the limit, may not be decisively exhausted. Conceivably, aside from his dense and desperate political quarrels, man may still take pride in the commemoration of the culture he has made and regard its comprehension as a philosophical task of urgency.

Yet the Hegelian vision of the spirit's progress and goal in history as facilitated by politics is, as I have suggested, basically dead, discarded, or obscure for the contemporary understanding. Certain strains of Marxism play with it, invert it, or recompose it in ways that are frequently more profound than other solutions to the riddle of history in our times. If they are more profound, it is because they are more convinced that man has a meaning and history a destiny. To say that their own contradictions betray them is not to dishonor their effort.

Outside of Marxism, the philosophy of history has fallen on evil days, or at least has not restored its claim to human guidance. Within philosophy it has been reduced to a clarification of the linguistic and rhetorical forms of historical production (dealt with by Hegel himself under the rubric of "critical reflective history," if one takes care to add a "meta" to the operation described as the "criticism of historical narratives and an investigation of their truth and credibility").<sup>39</sup>

Within history, the prevailing concern is for writing segments of history in such a way that comparisons can be made and processes of development induced from organized materials, ordinarily so as to construct ideal-typical

<sup>38</sup> D'Hondt, *De Hegel à Marx*, p. 16.

<sup>39</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 7.

models of the passage from a condition called “traditionalism” to one called “modernity” by a process known as “modernization.”<sup>40</sup> The “modernizing revolution” is the general case on which practically all of the discordant schools of thought can agree conceptually. The vast literature on this subject can neither be mentioned nor dealt with critically in the present essay: that would be a millennial task. However, a few points can be made through reference to a recent, much praised synthetic work on the comparative history of modernization by C. E. Black.

“It was not so long ago,” the author declares, “that historians hesitated to generalize about Europe and concerned themselves only with individual countries. The time has now come to formulate generalizations about the whole of mankind in modern times.”<sup>41</sup> The pronouncement has a ring that inescapably reminds us of certain eighteenth-century synthesizers. The task now, however, is to attack the problem “scientifically,” and not merely according to one’s teleological bent or bias. While conceding that “no two societies are entirely alike and all are in a continual process of change,” the writer affirms that the “conception of modernity, when thought of as a model or ideal type, may be used as a yardstick with which to measure any society.”<sup>42</sup> Indeed it may, as might other stipulated yardsticks; and yet, despite pages of useful discussion and hints, one has trouble locating any concise definition of “modernity” in the work. The concept has much of the ambiguity of Hegel’s “present standpoint”; indeed it is hard to see how its proponent, any more than Hegel, can “leap over Rhodes.” Thus, although it has no ostensible philosophy as a support, this theory of comparative modernization seems no less “presentist” in its implications than Hegel’s notion of

<sup>40</sup> For a sophisticated analysis, see especially Reinhard Bendix, “Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (April 1967), pp. 292–346.

<sup>41</sup> C. E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization: A Study in Comparative History* (New York, 1967), p. 45.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

the consummation of "objective spirit." It tends to reduce itself to the banality that "modernity" is that which is most visibly modern, according to the criteria of those who define modernity; but it is aimless, passionless, and complacent compared to Hegel's vision of the spiritual achievement of humanity through self-knowledge.

Another pseudo-Hegelian element is present in the work: "modernization," like the progress of the spirit in history, has its "slaughterbench" aspect, achieving its result at a high price in human suffering. "The modern age, more than any other, has been an age of assassinations, of civil, religious, and international wars, of mass slaughter in many forms, and of concentration camps. Never before has human life been disposed of so lightly as the price for immediate goals."<sup>43</sup> Although one would surely not accuse the author of approving these De Maistrian sacrifices in the interest of collective human advance, his posture remains ambiguous in the light of the thesis, which, at innumerable points, depicts "modernization" as not only a necessary but a desirable condition of human self-realization. The difference from Hegel is the absence of a comprehension derived from anything beyond statistical or intuitive regularities of the progress of societies, the neglect of any moral justification for the course of the world. As consolation, the author tells us that "man is not a captive of his history,"<sup>44</sup> but in so doing he appears to set what is reasonable in man against his own history (in an inconclusive, even frivolous way), whereas Hegel had attempted the far more difficult task of rejoining them.

"It is easier," the author properly grants, "to define what a history of mankind in its totality should not be than what it should be, for there are many examples that one should avoid."<sup>45</sup> One of these is apparently the Hegelian method, which has not "borne rich fruits in historiography" and where the theorist attempts "by an imaginative leap . . . to

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.



rally the forces of world history to the support of the particular solution that he has in mind.”<sup>46</sup> This is, to say the least, a rather vulgar précis of Hegel’s project and of the relation of history to his general philosophical scheme. So long as Hegelianism is linked by leading scholars to impossible fancies and flights of bias, while they believe their own theses to be scientifically sound and impeccably dispassionate, it is difficult to see how the virtues of Hegel’s vision (including his audacity and *panache*) could be of much service to contemporary historiography. But it is also difficult to see how the question of purpose in history can be permanently avoided. “Modernity,” at least, must be given a content and a valuation that justify its appearance, not simply an acknowledgment that its achievement is necessary, though heart-rending to millions.

There is a further tendency in most, but not all, uses of the concept “modernity” that demands our attention if we are to be just, but not lenient, to Hegel’s philosophy of history. This is the “suggestion that modernity represents a single, final state of affairs, namely the ‘state of affairs’ to be found in a number of Western societies which everyone should try to emulate, and which the most successful could reach.”<sup>47</sup> According to the authors of this passage, this notion “provides the final confirmation that many discussions of modernity have not been genuinely conceptual or theoretical, but mere word-juggling.” If “modernity” is in any way comparable to Hegel’s notion of the present (which is certainly debatable), then both stand equally accused of a Europocentric bias, which many tongues denounce and which history itself may be in the process of denying. Although tortured efforts have been made by some interpreters and epigoni of Hegel to deny that he saw no world-historical destinies for discrete non-European “spirits,” I

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>47</sup> J. P. Nettl and Roland Robertson, *International Systems and the Modernization of Societies: The Formation of National Goals and Attitudes* (New York, 1968), pp. 42–43.

think we must allow that while the "Germanic spirit" scarcely silences history, it completes the mission of historical understanding and calls for a sequence of historical materials that can safely inhabit its premises.

From our own vantage point, there are at least three plausible objections to this notion. First, the ideal of freedom may be correct, but its "Germanic" version may be partial or self-defeating as a human destiny. Second, Hegel's valuation of freedom may be effective as a goal, but it may have been decisively thwarted by the subsequent train of events. Third, Hegel's association of the highest manifestation of spirit with certain territorial and cultural entities may have been wildly aberrant in both conceptualization and fact. Indeed, many Westerners as well as most non-Westerners would accept any one or more of these judgments. The sun may not "rise in the East and set in the West."

Yet the prudent and civilized Western scholar must be ambivalent about rejecting the self-assured promises and claims put forward on behalf of the European spirit in better times. Surely Hegel's image (*via* Montesquieu and others) of a fossilized Asia cloaked in political night, and his brief, but scarcely complimentary, vignettes of other non-European peoples reflect a bias that seems very far from our present reality. And yet the effusion of sympathy and admiration that many generous-spirited Westerners feel for these peoples depends, to a considerable degree, either on a complex of art, culture, and folkways whose classical vitality is itself now part of a past and of memory, or else on ingenious imports—technological, and occasionally political, aptitudes—of selected parts of the Western spirit. The problem of the philosophy of history has become far more drastically a problem of translation, one that is partly clarified but surely not solved by the comparative anthropological and structural-functional methods now in vogue.

Western European civilization (and its overseas exten-

sions) has no very good reason to take pride in its presumed consummation of “God’s march through the world,” or the culture it has achieved “at the present standpoint” to accompany that divine promenade. On the other hand, even the student of comparative cultures may be disposed to allow a grandeur to the power of Western conceptions of man’s universe, in both their depth and their quality of overreaching, and to sense in them both an element of the divine and a promissory statement of man’s best hope. The highest examples of these, it may seem, have proved inadequate to the continuing task—although a certain belief still resonates in them—but they recall us to a sense of the human errand and penetration of the human mystery that is far from paltry. Half-hidden as they are in a boneyard of ideas, a habitation they share with barren formulas, preposterous conceits, and sentimental sludge, they are worth redeeming, even as Hegel found the trophies of Greece worth redeeming in the mind’s temple.<sup>48</sup> To be civilized can mean no less. It is perhaps the hypocrisy of our history as juxtaposed to what is richest in our cultural and philosophical self-understanding that leads us to accuse the bases of that understanding and go in search of strange gods. But despite the deficiencies of Hegel’s grasp of history, he encourages us to look upon the world rationally (we being presumably rational creatures), and to find reason in a world created through our confluence.<sup>49</sup> And despite his strategic (as liberals would claim, dangerous and overbearing) placement of politics in the life of men claimed to be “free,” Hegel quite clearly saw history and politics as a sequence of ennoblements, not of submissions, necessary to those activities where men are most truly human and *geistig*, and consequently free. As Merleau-Ponty writes: “A philosophy of history takes away none of my rights, none of my initiatives. It is true only that it adds to my obligations as a

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *Nürnberg Schriften*, ed. J. Hoffmeister (Leipzig, 1938), p. 312.

<sup>49</sup> *Philosophy of History*, p. 11.



solitary being that of understanding situations other than my own, of creating a pathway between my life and the lives of others, that is to say, of expressing myself."<sup>50</sup> Despite the many ignominies of politics and the cold shiver we receive from certain uses of the world *Kultur*, the matter is still worth pondering.

Of course one of Hegel's well-known lessons is that philosophy cannot create culture; it can only explain it. Beneath the surface of the Hegelian notion of what philosophy is and can achieve, there is that bittersweet evocation of nostalgia so reminiscent of Plato's three interlocutors in the *Laws* (even though they are proposing to build a new city they are reflecting on the best of what has been learned). That "there is less chill in the peace with the world that knowledge supplies," may seem like cold comfort to anyone aspiring to stoke up the furnace of history.<sup>51</sup> And thus aspects of an Hegelian melancholy, very different in thrust from the unceasing bustle of the dialectic's "absolute method," have helped to inspire ideas of a history that goes around in competitive or detached cycles and is intelligible only in the running of its own particular course. Voices of antiquity and the metaphor of organic nature speak through this conception; and the motto of the *Untergang des Abendlandes* replies to them across the ages.<sup>52</sup> However, if a mood in Hegel presaged the practical futility of philosophical comprehension, this thesis does not appear to have been his last word. For philosophy teaches us to know and commemorate culture, and culture is the pathway by which we become the willingly responsible agents of our society and the guardians of its *politeia*. As Frye, writing on Spengler, puts it: "What Spengler said would happen is happening,

<sup>50</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Le Langage indirect et les voix du silence," *Signes* (Paris, 1960), p. 93.

<sup>51</sup> Preface to *Philosophy of Right*, p. 12.

<sup>52</sup> For a stimulating and judicious reappraisal of Spengler's mixed achievement, see Northrop Frye, "The Decline of the West," in *Daedalus*: "Twentieth Century Classics Revisited" (Winter 1974), pp. 1-13.

to a very considerable degree. But while Spengler is one of our genuine prophets, he is not our definitive prophet: other things are also happening, in areas that still invite our energies and loyalties and are not marked off with the words ‘too late.’”<sup>53</sup> Hegel, I think, would not have phrased his response in quite the same fashion. But he undoubtedly would have pointed out that such things as “doing philosophy,” “becoming civilized,” and “taking public responsibility” are not the vain acts of a senescent society. They are acts of spirit that can be fulfilled only in, through, and for a community of men—to sustain it honorably while it lasts, and to cause it to be praised when it is gone.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

## INDEX

- Absolute Spirit, 9, 20–21, 33, 37, 48, 116, 159, 186–187, 198, 228, 239, 242
- aesthetics, 6, 58, 59–60, 65–68, 71, 76–78, 80–81, 83–86, 88, 110, 217
- Alain (Emile Chartier), 93
- Alexander I, of Russia, 121–122
- alienation, 41–43, 65, 74–75, 86, 125–126
- Almond, Gabriel, 206
- Altenstein, Karl Sigmund Franz von, 122, 215
- America: authority in, 204, 220; Burdeau's interpretation, 193–194; and criteria of statehood, 189–190; depreciation of the state, 92, 103–107, 195–196, 205; future of, 181, 183–185, 189, 192–193; Hartz's interpretation, 192; Huntington's interpretation, 193–194; ideologies of, 191–197; ideology and methodology, 196; intellectuals in, 216–217; Marx's interpretation, 169–170, 181; as "neutral state," 184; notion of the state, 92; presidency, 220–221; sects in, 181, 185; state and society, 195–196; and subjectivity, 187–188; Tocqueville's interpretation, 180–181; violence in, 207–209; welfare state, 194, 206–207
- Anaxagoras, 226
- Ancien Régime, 72, 92, 119, 148, 160, 167, 171, 182, 215
- Arendt, Hannah, 220, 233
- aristocracy, 49, 51, 72, 139, 141, 148–149
- Aristotle, 8, 38, 96, 108, 139, 198, 211, 226
- Aron, Raymond, 99, 238
- Avineri, Shlomo, 16, 198, 199, 235
- "bad infinity," 10, 22–25, 125–126
- Bartholus of Sassoferato, 118
- Bayle, Pierre, 56, 115
- Bentham, Jeremy, 100
- Bentley, Arthur, 92, 206
- Bismarck, Otto von, 18
- Black, C. E., 243–245
- Bodin, Jean, 118, 120
- Boileau, Nicolas, 56
- Bosanquet, Bernard, 3, 92
- Bossuet, Jacques Bénigne, 93
- bourgeoisie, 93, 96, 139, 148–150, 168, 188–189, 240
- British idealists, 150–151, 199
- Bruni, Leonardo, 108
- Brunn, Professor, 94
- Brunschwig, Henri, 95, 139
- Burdeau, Georges, 101–103, 193–194, 196
- bureaucracy, 15–16, 94, 132, 136–137, 144, 147, 165–166, 209–212
- Burke, Edmund, 119–120, 130, 176
- Calonne, Charles Alexandre de, 155



## INDEX

- Cassirer, Ernst, 25  
 Catholicism, 118, 120–121, 124–126, 131–132, 134, 143, 178  
 Charles X, of France, 178  
 Charter of 1814 (France), 145  
 Chateaubriand, François-René de, 18, 126, 129, 237  
 Christianity, 14, 18, 20–21, 49, 54, 55, 62, 66, 81, 83, 86–88, 99–100, 114–116, 118–121, 123–127, 130–134, 136, 145, 156–160, 162–163, 169–170, 173–174, 176, 179–182, 185, 205  
 Cieszkowski, August Dolega von, 161  
 citizens, 90, 93, 100, 106, 164, 170, 180, 188, 194  
 classicism, 16, 38, 53, 56, 59, 68, 73–74, 85, 88–89, 211  
 community, 13–15, 27, 34, 63, 72, 74, 76, 81, 87, 107, 113, 120, 141, 169–170; and *see* *Volksgeist*  
 “concept” (*Begriff*), 9, 164–165, 187  
 consciousness: deduction of, 34–35, 39–41, 42–43; “unhappy consciousness,” 4, 55–56, 65–66, 88  
 conservatism, 17–18, 90, 95, 117, 121–123, 176–177  
 Constant, Benjamin, 18, 140, 178, 229  
 Constitution of 1791 (France), 93, 145  
 constitutionalism, 17, 93, 105, 140, 142, 146–149, 177, 205–206, 210  
 “constraint theory” of Dahrendorf, 204  
 corporations, 139, 142, 165, 198, 200, 211  
 Croce, Benedetto, 153  
 culture: and bondage, 32, 51; and bureaucracy, 14–16, 211, 214–215; and community, 13–14; and Greece, 60, 73–74, 77, 82; and memory, 10, 89, 108, 239, 247–249; and philosophy, 10, 57, 88, 239, 246–247; and politics, 14–16, 27, 71, 87–88, 106–107, 110, 123, 179; and the state, 19–20, 76, 80, 100–101, 136–137, 198–199, 235  
 Dahrendorf, Ralf, 161, 204  
 Dante Alighieri, 96  
 de Gaulle, Charles, 93  
 d’Hondt, Jacques, 233, 241–242  
 Descartes, René, 13, 45, 159, 225  
 desire, 36, 42, 51  
 de Tocqueville, Alexis, 93, 129, 180–182, 184, 191, 195  
 Dewey, John, 92  
 dialectics, 36, 37, 39–40, 42–43, 50–53, 55–56, 78–79, 84, 112, 115, 117, 225, 227–228; and system, 233–235, 238–242  
 Dilthey, Wilhelm, 81, 214  
*doctrinaires*, 145  
 drama, 58–59, 61, 63–64  
 dualism, 22–23, 37, 44, 46–47, 54; of church and state, 99, 118–120, 156–157, of society and state, 111–112, 164–165, 174–175, 190–195, 199–203  
 Dunayevskaya, Raya, 238–240  
 Durkheim, Emile, 69, 204  
 education, 14–16, 52, 75–76, 88, 121, 136–137, 142, 211–212, 215–216  
 elitism, 14–16, 76, 88, 94, 142, 148–150, 214–216  
 Elizabeth I, of England, 119  
 empiricism, 45, 225

## INDEX

- Engels, Friedrich, 133, 161, 240  
 English Reform Bill of 1832, 17, 92, 131  
 Enlightenment, 45, 56, 70, 73, 95, 114–115, 120–121, 160  
*Enzyklopädie*, 20, 30, 42–43, 50–51, 67, 125–126, 239  
 Europeanism, 27–28, 53, 184–185, 245–247
- Fairlie, Henry, 183  
 Ferguson, Adam, 69  
 Feuerbach, Ludwig, 119, 159, 163–164, 166, 170  
 Fichte, Johann Gottlieb, 13, 35, 37, 46–50, 56, 58, 61, 73, 77, 84, 95, 153, 233  
 Francis I, of Austria, 121  
 Frederick II, of Prussia, 15, 94  
 Frederick William II, of Prussia, 94  
 Frederick William III, of Prussia, 121  
 freedom, 3, 45, 49, 52, 64, 72, 75, 77, 80, 87–88, 108, 112–113, 123, 131–132, 135, 138, 146, 206, 225  
 French Revolution of 1789, 26, 46–47, 60–62, 69, 71–73, 86, 93, 95, 114, 117, 126, 128–129, 134, 141, 160, 173, 237  
 French Revolution of 1830, 178  
 Freneau, Philip, 154  
 Friedrich Christian, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, 71  
 Fries, Jacob Friedrich, 135  
 Frye, Northrop, 248–249
- Gerlach, Ernst Ludwig von, 124–125  
*German Constitution, The*, 24, 86–87  
 “German Revolution,” 134
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 57, 68, 77, 78, 142, 225  
 Gramsci, Antonio, 137, 216  
 Greece, 10, 14, 26, 38, 45, 53, 59–60, 63, 73–74, 77, 82, 85–86, 89, 90, 114, 123, 128, 198  
 Greenleaf, W. H., 5  
 groups, 103–104  
 Guillotin, Joseph Ignace, 155  
 Guizot, François, 178
- Habermas, Jürgen, 115, 172  
 Haller, Karl Ludwig von, 134–135  
 Hardenberg, Karl August von, 16, 122, 154  
 Hartz, Louis, 192–193, 196  
 Hayek, F. A., 106–107, 111  
 Haym, Rudolf, 17, 39, 117  
 Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich: and aesthetics, 7, 25, 58–59, 62, 66, 79–81, 85–86; break with Romanticism, 3, 86–87; breakdown of synthesis, 27–28, 143, 151, 154, 156, 168–169, 182–183; and bureaucracy, 15–16, 136–137, 165–166, 198, 209–217; and Catholicism, 120, 124–126, 131–132; compared with Goethe, 68; criticism of America, 181, 184–185, 187–189; early writings, 30–31, 36–37, 62–63, 79–83, 86–87; and Fichte, 46, 48–50, 84; and Grecophilia, 38, 59–60, 63, 79–81, 86, 89, 113, 198; and historical pessimism, 248–249; history and phenomenology, 38–39, 114; interpretation of “lordship and bondage,” 34–36, 39–43, 50–53; and Kant, 11–12, 22–23, 37, 44, 47, 62–63, 67, 81, 114, 128, 185–

## INDEX

### Hegel, Georg (*cont.*)

186, 219; and Marx, 12, 24, 52, 133–134, 164–170, 191–192; and monarchy, 140–142, 165, 190, 217–220; and neo-Marxists, 238–242; and “neutral state,” 136–142, 148–152, 157–159, 171, 209–212; originality of *Phenomenology*, 6, 12, 38–39; philosophy of history, 9–13, 50–52, 160–161, 184–187, 225–228, 234–236; and primacy of politics, 23, 86–88, 132–133, 189, 196–197, 204; and Proudhon, 179–180; and Prussia, 120, 130, 132–133, 144, 165, 210; relation to conservatism, 18, 118, 122–123, 217; relation to liberalism, 18–19, 117–118, 128–129, 202–203; relationship of politics and culture, 9–10, 27, 79–83, 86–88, 106, 113–114, 129–130, 136–137, 158, 199, 211; relationship of politics and knowledge, 14, 90, 136, 215–217; relationship of politics and religion, 20, 81–82, 87–88, 115–116, 118–121, 125–126, 132–133, 157–161; relationship of politics and science, 157–158; research methods regarding, 3–6; and the Restoration, 117, 121–123; retreat from politics, 24, 62, 79–80; and Royer-Collard, 145–151; and Schelling, 47–49, 83–85; and von Stein, 174–175, 201–202; and subjectivity, 15, 20, 58–59, 64–66, 113–114, 123, 128–130, 134–135, 187–188; theory of the State, 19, 20, 79–80, 87–88, 113–114, 123, 136–142, 168, 171–172, 197–201, 229; and

truth, 11–12, 225; uses by commentators, 3–5, 17, 31–33, 53; uses of Schiller, 25, 63–67, 110; view of “civil society,” 111–112, 188–190; view of the French Revolution, 26, 47, 61, 62, 86, 117, 128; view of the Protestant Reformation, 120, 124–125, 127–128, 132–134, 185; and Young Hegelians, 127, 161–164

Heine, Heinrich, 134

Heraclitus, 11

Herder, Johann Gottfried von, 48, 56, 74, 95

historicism, 12, 184, 228

Hobbes, Thomas, 45, 97, 118, 120, 174, 218

Hobhouse, Leonard T., 229

Hölderlin, Friedrich, 3, 42, 63

Hook, Sidney, 17

*Horen, Die*, 61

humanism, 5–6, 10, 76, 78, 85–86, 158, 160, 211, 215; anthropological humanism, 162–163, 170

Humboldt, Wilhelm von, 122, 153

Hume, David, 44, 56, 107, 172

Huntington, Samuel P., 194–196

Hyppolite, Jean, 31, 33

Idea, 9, 22, 186–187, 239

idealism, 10, 20, 22, 39, 44, 48, 57, 65, 75, 78, 84, 91, 125, 128, 159, 225–227

ideology, 4, 8, 17–19, 29–30, 90–91, 117–118, 122–124, 133–134, 148, 191–196, 202, 222, 233, 239–240, 243–246; “German ideology,” 127, 160, 167

intellectuals, 55–57, 76, 88, 162, 214–216, 240



# INDEX

- Jacobi, Friedrich Heinrich, 13, 56, 83, 84
- Jacobinism, 230
- Jaspers, Karl, 125
- Jena, 16, 30, 36–37, 58, 69, 83–84, 197–198
- Jesus, 167
- John of Paris, 118
- Jouvenel, Bertrand de, 107, 108
- Judaism, 31, 81
  
- Kant, Immanuel, 6, 11, 22, 23, 26, 44–45, 47–48, 53, 56, 60, 62–63, 67, 69–70, 74–76, 80, 84, 95, 105, 110, 124, 128, 134, 160, 173, 185–186, 216, 219, 226
- Kierkegaard, Søren, 78, 119, 153
- Klopstock, Friedrich Gottlieb, 60
- Kojève, Alexandre, 31–34, 51, 53, 227
- Kroner, Richard, 44, 79
  
- labor, 32–33, 36, 41, 51, 111, 167
- Laski, Harold, 92, 149–150
- Lassalle, Ferdinand, 178
- Latin America, 207, 231
- Laws of Plato*, 248
- legal voluntarism, 113, 138, 146, 217–220
- Lenin, V. I., 102, 153, 232
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, 48, 56
- liberalism, 18–19, 90–91, 105–107, 116–117, 126, 128–129, 135, 145–146, 163, 178, 192–193, 195, 199, 202–203, 206–207
- Lindsay, A. D., 92
- Lipset, Seymour Martin, 183
- Locke, John, 56, 106, 171, 196
- Löwith, Karl, 30, 68
- Louis XVI, of France, 141
- Louis XVIII, of France, 144–145
- Louis-Philippe, of France, 175
- Lukács, Georg, 153, 229, 233, 238
  
- Macaulay, Thomas B., 178
- Machiavellianism, 76–77, 108, 151, 171, 204, 221
- MacIntyre, Alasdair, 205
- Maistre, Joseph de, 244
- “mandarinate,” 215–216
- Mandeville, Bernard de, 173
- Mann, Thomas, 217
- Mannheim, Karl, 18, 117
- Mao Tse-tung, 239
- Marcuse, Herbert, 3, 238
- Marcuse, Herbert, 3, 238
- Marmontel, Jean-François, 46
- Marsilius of Padua, 118
- Marx, Karl, 19, 24, 30, 33, 43, 51, 66–67, 133, 137, 156, 159, 161, 163, 164–170, 181–182, 190–191, 202, 204, 227, 229, 232, 240; on America, 181–182, 190–192; breaking Hegelian syntagma, 162–170; *Critique of Hegel's “Philosophy of Right,”* 164–167; legacy to philosophy of history, 240–242; and “Marxian *Phenomenology*,” 4, 30–32, 52–53; theory of revolution, 133–134; theory of state, 90–92, 102, 149, 222
- Marxism, 12, 52, 90–91, 102, 108, 133–134, 151, 153, 168, 170, 191–192, 222, 232–233, 238–242
- Mayer, Arno J., 241
- Mazzini, Giuseppe, 232
- mediation, 14, 19–20, 25–26, 34–35, 38–39, 52–53, 66, 71, 72, 75–78, 86–89, 93, 100, 113, 125–126, 136, 142, 158, 171, 198–199, 201, 227, 229, 236
- Meinecke, Friedrich, 214

## INDEX

- memory, 10, 22, 27, 51, 66, 85,  
88, 168, 227, 237, 247–248
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 23,  
247–248
- Metternich, Clemens von, 121–  
122
- Michel, Henri, 155
- Michelet, Carl Ludwig von, 177
- middle class, 139, 147–150,  
175, 211–212
- Miliband, Ralph, 166
- Mill, John Stuart, 153, 188
- Milton, John, 90, 124
- Mirabeau, Victor de Riquetti,  
Comte de, 141–142
- “modernization,” 154, 161, 191–  
192, 194–195, 214, 243–245
- monarchy, 123, 131–132, 140–  
142, 144–146, 165, 170, 173,  
175, 177, 190, 194–195,  
217–221
- Montesquieu, Charles-Louis  
Secondat, Baron de, 15, 43–44,  
81, 128, 142, 206, 246
- Montgelas, Maximilian Joseph de  
Garnerin von, 132
- Moore, Barrington, Jr., 161
- morality, 64, 72–78, 128–130,  
134–135, 244
- Mosca, Gaetano, 202, 203, 205
- Müller, Adam, 122–124
- Murc, G.R.G., 37
- Napoleon I, of France, 12, 93,  
227, 237
- nationalism, 19, 100, 173, 200,  
234
- Needler, Martin, 207–208
- “neutral power,” 140, 229
- Niethammer, Friedrich Imman-  
uel, 17, 66
- Nietzsche, Friedrich, 51, 119
- Nisbet, Robert, 107
- Nkrumah, Kwame, 232
- Nohl, Hermann, 81
- “Normalvolk,” 49
- Novalis (Friedrich von Harden-  
berg), 48, 217
- Nozick, Robert, 106
- Nyerere, Julius, 231
- Oakshott, Michael, 106
- Old Hegelians, 176–178
- order, natural and providential,  
226–227
- organizations, rule-governed and  
purpose-governed, 106–107
- Parsons, Talcott, 204
- parties, 132, 177, 213, 221
- Pascal, Blaise, 13
- Peace of Augsburg, 119
- Pelczynski, Zbigniew A., 17
- “people,” 93, 120, 123, 129, 140,  
146–147, 189, 211, 216, 221
- philosophical vulgarization, 13,  
48, 58
- philosophy and history: in Amer-  
ica, 184–195; comparative  
history, 243–246; Fichte’s phi-  
losophy of history, 48–50;  
Hegel’s philosophy of history,  
9–13, 225–227, 234–237;  
historical intelligibility, 225–  
227; historical pessimism, 248–  
249; Kant’s philosophy of his-  
tory, 69, 70, 185–186; neo-  
Marxism, 233, 238–242; rela-  
tionship, 6, 9–13, 21–23, 87–89,  
159–160, 168, 184–187, 227–  
229, 234–236; Schelling’s  
philosophy of history, 48–49;  
Schiller’s philosophy of history,  
70–76
- Plamenatz, John, 33, 41
- Plato, 8, 14–15, 26, 38, 53, 225,  
248
- “play impulse,” 71, 77

# INDEX

- political economy, 111, 173, 199–200
- “political formula,” 103, 202
- Popper, Karl, 203
- positivism, 160, 161, 179–180
- progress, 11, 23, 32, 49, 74, 161, 179, 184–185
- Propädeutik*, 30, 40, 41
- Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph, 93, 157, 179–180
- Prussia, 94–95, 120–122, 127, 130, 132, 144, 154, 164–165, 176, 183
- public authority, frustrations of, 103–104, 108, 203–206, 220, 222, 230–231
  
- Rawls, John, 105–106
- Raynal, Guillaume Thomas, 155
- realism, 24–25, 91, 102–103, 136, 203
- reason, 12, 22–23, 44, 46, 49–50, 71, 73, 75, 113, 219, 225–226
- Rechtsstaat*, 94–95, 117, 138, 164–166, 198, 215–216
- Reformation Protestantism, 115, 119–120, 124–126, 127–128, 132–133
- regnum*, 91, 99, 118, 157, 173
- Reinhold, Karl Leonard, 69
- religion, 20, 62, 66, 68, 87–88, 98–100, 115–116, 118–123, 124–126, 156–158, 160–164, 169–170, 173–174, 176, 179–182, 185
- representation, 93, 131, 135–136, 139–142, 146–147, 207–209, 213, 221
- republicanism, 108, 130–131, 140, 178, 180, 220–221
- Restoration, 16, 112, 117, 121–123, 132, 144–150, 160
- revolution and counterrevolution, 239–241
- Richelieu, Cardinal de, 148
- “right of conquest,” 44, 46–47
- rights, 44–46, 51–52, 61, 106, 113, 132, 137–138, 145, 147, 155, 177
- Ringer, Fritz, 215
- Robespierre, Maximilien, 129
- Rössler, Constantin, 177
- Romanticism, 15, 17, 85, 89, 111, 114, 118, 123–124, 130, 217
- Rosenkranz, Karl, 117, 176–177
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 25, 44–45, 50, 64, 68, 118, 119, 206
- Royer-Collard, Pierre-Paul, 145–151, 178
- Ruge, Arnold, 162–164
  
- sacerdotium*, 99, 118, 157, 173
- St. Augustine, 90, 227
- Saint-Just, Louis-Antoine de, 155
- Saint-Simon, Henri, Comte de, 172
- St. Thomas Aquinas, 96, 108, 118, 155
- Saussure, Ferdinand de, 96–97
- Scheler, Max, 214
- Schelling, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von, 36–37, 47–49, 60, 83–85
- Schiller, Friedrich von, 25, 56, 58–79, 81–82, 85–87, 110; *Aesthetic Education*, 25, 71–79; “aesthetic state,” 76, 110; aesthetics and morality, 62, 67, 70–72, 82, 84; art process, 76–77, 81, 85; and dialectics, 78–79; and freedom, 64, 69, 74–76; Grecophilia, 59–60; “natural state,” 72, 75; relationship with Goethe, 68; retreat from politics, 25, 74–76, 110; theater, 58–59, 61, 63–64; view of French Revolution, 65–66, 71–73
- Schlegel brothers, 48, 124



# INDEX

- sectarianism, 128, 169–170, 181–182, 185
- secularization, 119–120, 156–157
- Shklar, Judith N., 128
- Sieyès, Immanuel Joseph, 129, 155
- Sittlichkeit*, 15, 27, 34, 54, 78, 83, 86, 88, 113, 125–127, 200
- Smith, Adam, 92
- social science, 43, 45, 104, 109, 112, 174–175, 203–204
- Socrates, 10, 113, 167
- Sophocles, 38
- South Germany, 132
- sovereignty, 92, 93, 140, 147, 165, 217–220
- Spengler, Oswald, 248–249
- Spinoza, Benedict de, 115–116
- Staël, Germaine de, 95, 149
- state: “aesthetic state,” *see* Schiller; in America, 180–181, 184–196; and bureaucracy, 107, 136–137, 165–166, 209–217; and church, 99–100, 115–116, 118–121, 125–126, 132–133, 156–158, 169–170, 180–182; “class state,” 90–91, 103, 139, 147–150, 166–167, 174–175; corruption in England, 130–131; definition of, 100–102; emergence of, 52, 72–75, 99–100, 102, 114–115, 188–190, 200–201; and group, 103–104; Hegel’s theory of, 136–142, 197–201; ideologies of, 90–91; interpreted by Burdeau, 101–102; interpreted by Ruge, 163–164; interpreted by von Stein, 174–176; and law, 64, 72–75, 101, 137–139; linguistic-structural analysis of, 96–98; “metaphysical state,” 8–9, 27, 114, 116, 125–126, 164–165, 200, 217, 230; and middle class, 139, 147–150, 211–212; and modern criticism, 104–108, 148, 153, 191–195; and monarchy, 114, 140–142, 165, 175, 190, 194, 217–220; national-linguistic traditions of, 91–96; “natural state,” *see* Schiller; *see* “neutral state”; new states, 102, 231–232; overcoming of, 74–76, 80, 153, 170; persistence of form, 99, 153, 191; and philosophy, 19–22, 100–101, 109, 125–126, 132–133, 159–160, 164–165, 185–187; primitive state, 52, 184–185; and science, 112, 157–158, 179–180; and society, 104–106, 111–112, 114–115, 144, 172–175, 179–180, 181–182, 188–190, 195–196, 202–206, 231; substitute terms for, 91–92; theories of, 6, 16–20, 26, 87–88, 90–107, 125–126, 136–142, 145–150, 164–167, 174–177, 184–201; as viewed by conservatives, 18, 90; as viewed by liberals, 18–19, 90, 91; as viewed by Marxists, 90–91, 164–168; as viewed by reactionaries, 122–123
- Stein, Karl Vom, 26, 132, 154
- Stein, Lorenz von, 18, 174–176, 182, 201–202
- stoicism, 39, 47, 52
- Strauss, David, 119, 163
- struggle, 34–36, 38, 41, 43, 46, 50, 52–54, 64, 70–71, 74, 167, 175
- Struik, Dirk J., 43
- subjectivity, 20, 25–26, 34, 58–59, 64–67, 113–114, 124, 128–130, 135, 143, 165, 184, 187–188, 208, 212, 219, 228
- Swift, Jonathan, 121
- synchronic, 96

## INDEX

- syntagma, 97-98, 112, 116, 126,  
134, 152, 154, 156, 161-164,  
168-171, 176, 178, 182
- "system of needs," 110, 128, 188
- "Systemprogramm," 63, 79-80
  
- Taylor, Charles, 159
- theodicy, 226
- Thouret, Jacques Guillaume, 141
- Thrasymachus, 108
- Touré, Sékou, 231
- transcendence, 22-25, 32, 48,  
52, 75, 80, 125-126
- transformative method of Feuer-  
bach, 163, 164, 166
- Treitschke, Heinrich Gotthard  
von, 178
- Trotsky, Lev Davidovitch, 192
  
- utility, 56, 73, 111, 114, 119,  
124, 202
- "value theory" of Parsons, 204
- Vaughan, C. E., 92
- violence: anomic, representa-  
tional, revolutionary, 207-209
- Volksgeist*, 15, 19, 36, 77, 81, 82,  
87, 187, 235, 236
  
- Wars of Religion, 119, 130, 133-  
134
- Weber, Max, 97, 124, 132, 157,  
212
- Weil, Eric, 127
- Weldon, T. D., 102
- Wellesley, Arthur, Duke of  
Wellington, 17
- William of Moerbeke, 96
- Wolin, Sheldon, 156-157
- Wurtemberg, 17, 122
  
- Young Hegelians, 115, 161-164,  
170, 176, 232

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING  
IN PUBLICATION DATA

Kelly, George Armstrong, 1932-  
Hegel's retreat from Eleusis.

Includes index.

1. Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, 1770-1831—  
Political Science. I. Title.

JC233.H46K44 320.5'092'4 77-85542

ISBN 0-691-07589-1



# JOHN STUART MILL AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

DENNIS F. THOMPSON

"The basic theme of this important new study on Mill is that his *Representative Government* is more coherent and systematic as a treatise in political theory than has often been assumed. Professor Thompson makes his case by a careful analysis not only of the text itself but also through a detailed scrutiny of Mill's notes, and other writing. The result is an impressive work of scholarship. An adequate understanding of this particular work by Mill is crucial to our appreciation of the development of democratic thought in the 19th century. Professor Thompson's fine study is a welcome addition not only to a library on Mill but on democratic theory as well." —*Virginia Quarterly Review*

" . . . a major contribution to Mill scholarship; [this work] has disposed of many problems which have long perplexed interpreters of Mill's political thought. It is done well, in clear, polished prose, with consistency of manner and tone."

—*American Historical Review*

"Professor Thompson has brought to his task a command of the methodological tools of political science, an extensive knowledge and acute appreciation of writings by and about Mill, and a perceptive intelligence."

—*The Mill News Letter*

ISBN 07582-4. 241 pages. 1976.

Cover design by Laury A. Egan

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY  
OF ROUSSEAU  
ROGER D. MASTERS

"Likely to remain for a long time the best general commentary on Rousseau's political thought."

—*The Times Literary Supplement*

"Mr. Masters has written a genuinely interesting and serious book on Rousseau. Not least among his virtues is that he never patronizes Rousseau, but accepts him for what he was: an extremely intelligent and well-read man. . . . This is much more than a mere explication of texts. Each work is interpreted, not only in terms of Rousseau's other political writings, but also of those classical authors who are most relevant to his concerns."—*Political Science Quarterly*

"[This is] a model study which illustrates again the kinds of insight and understanding which can be won by a patient and careful reading. . . . Masters' book is, without question, the most important single work in English on the subject of Rousseau."—*The National Review*

Cloth: ISBN 07515-8. Paper: ISBN 01989-4. 488 pages. 1968.

DILTHEY, PHILOSOPHER OF THE  
HUMAN STUDIES  
RUDOLF A. MAKKREEL

"Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), the renowned German philosopher, argued for analytic psychology as the basis for philosophy, a central spiritual science distinct from the natural sciences. He stressed history and the development of ideas to the exclusion of metaphysics. Rudolf Makkreel presents a thoughtfully argued, comprehensive interpretation of Dilthey's philosophy and of its development."

—*Independent, Press-Telegram, Long Beach, California*

"From my own experience I know that the translating of philosophical German is treacherous, and this detailed account of *Geisteswissenschaften*—especially tricky—is done very well indeed. So much of the neo-Kantian, Phenomenological, and other systems has been included that the book is an excellent introduction and interpretation for a study of the intricacies of the controversies during several decades of German thinking (and quarreling). Congratulations!"

—*Herbert Schneider, Columbia University*

Cloth: ISBN 07200-0. Paper: ISBN 10032-2. 470 pages. 1975.

Order from your bookstore, or  
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Princeton, New Jersey 08540